

# spare Rib

No 33/30p

**WHY WAS THIS WOMAN IN PRISON?**



**Turkish Clothing Workers Strike**  
**WOMEN and STERILISATION...**  
**facts and feelings**

**Pat Arrowsmith's Poems...**

**Germaine Greer on Population Control...**

**Margaret Walters on Male Sex Objects**



# Daddy

By Peter Whitehead/  
Niki de St. Phalle

**ELECTRIC CINEMA CLUB**  
191 Portobello Road, W11  
Phone 727 4992

**SUNDAY, MARCH 2**  
2.00pm  
Admission 60p

"In no way an orthodox rendering of  
Women's Liberation views (indeed it  
may be deemed heretical)"

*Arts Guardian*

A discussion with Laura Mulvey  
and Peter Whitehead will follow  
the film.

spare **Rib**  
presentation



# Rise up, Women!

*The Militant Campaign of the Women's  
Social and Political Union 1903-1914*

**ANDREW ROSEN**

'Rosen has provided a foundation on  
which women's history can effectively  
build in the future . . . Rosen's ample  
and scrupulous documentation, his wide  
and scrupulous reading, lend conviction  
to his analysis.'—Brian Harrison, *The  
Sunday Times*

'He has documented the militant period  
more closely than anyone has yet done  
and his account is detailed, clear and  
balanced . . . As a guide through the  
political scene, Rosen is superbly  
equipped and the book will be necessary  
reading for students of the period.'

—Claire Tomalin, *Observer*

illustrations, £6.95

**ROUTLEDGE**



## PHOEBE SNOW

Having been raised on Busby Berkeley,  
Judy Garland and Shirley Temple, it  
sure was a strange meld when Phoebe  
Snow's guitar teacher turned her on to  
the basic rural blues of John Hurt and  
Bill Broonzy. By combining torch songs,  
jazz and basic blues licks, Phoebe has  
rapidly developed her own unique  
style which can be found on her debut  
album which is already a Top 20 hit in  
the States. Just named "New Artist Of  
The Year" by Rolling Stone.  
AMLS 68283



## STRAWBS Ghosts

Led by Dave Cousins,  
Strawbs have seen many  
changes in the musical  
scene and they have just  
recorded their most  
pleasing album since  
"Grave New World"  
AMHL 68277

## PETER ALLEN

**Continental American**  
Peter's music recalls the  
golden age of the Café  
Society when artists like  
Hoagy Carmichael, Mabel  
Mercy and Billie Holiday  
were the toast of New York.  
"Continental American" is  
his first album for A&M.  
AMLS 63643



## THE OZARK MOUNTAIN DAREDEVILS

**It'll Shine When It Shines**  
Sparkling new music from A&M's  
American country music band.  
Recorded live in the Ozarks, "Shine"  
features songs written by just about  
every member of the group. Produced  
by Glyn Johns and David Anderle.  
AMHL 63654





|               |    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|---------------|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Letters       | 4  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Shortlist     | 6  | Events, actions, publications.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Editorial     | 8  | The significance for women of the links between birth control and population control.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|               | 9  | "Between the extremes stands the individual woman, whose womb has become a vehicle of government policy" Germaine Greer.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Medical       | 10 | <b>Sterilisation</b> Sue O'Sullivan describes the available methods of sterilisation for women, the confrontations women can expect from the medical profession, and perhaps from within their own feelings as well, and gives five women's experiences of this operation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Sex           | 14 | <b>Playmales</b> Margaret Walters takes a long, hard look at playmates in <i>Playgirl</i> and <i>Viva</i> .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Interview     | 16 | "Pillow cases in the bottom of my ironing bag gathered mildew" Emmy Smith writes about waking from the domestic dream and discovering what she wants to do.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| News          | 17 | <b>Organising within the Community</b> The strike of Turkish clothing workers at Saadet Fashions in Hackney, East London.<br><b>St Johns Wood Women</b> The last hearing of their trial and the feminist implications of self-representation.<br><b>"Redhead took on Honey Blonde yesterday"</b> Women workers in the communications industry organise against sexism in the media.<br><b>Reports:</b> Leeds Women's Aid and the local authority; Women students and equal opportunity in Oxford; Islington mothers demand road safety "kids before traffic"; Bristol Women's Liberation make TV programme about abortion.<br><b>Overseas:</b> Maids sue their 'Unequal Opportunity' employer - Columbia University, USA; Women burn symbols of femininity in Portugal. |
| Odds and Sods | 29 | Inquiries for information and advice.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Feature       | 30 | <b>Inside</b> Maureen Reynolds' story is an indictment of the prison system. She describes her trial, her life inside and the effect which captivity, pointless deprivation and mindless regulations had upon her and other women prisoners.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Poetry        | 35 | Poems written in Holloway by Pat Arrowsmith.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Reviews       | 37 | <b>Books:</b> Anne Severson and Doris Lessing's <i>Memoirs of a Survivor</i> , Jean Radford on Tillie Olsen's <i>Yonnondio</i> .<br><b>Kids Books:</b> Go tell Aunt Rhody, Hal.<br><b>Film:</b> Margaret Walters reviews <i>Badlands</i> .<br><b>Theatre:</b> Michelene Wandor reviews <i>Buzz Goodbody's Lear</i> .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Work          | 41 | <b>Homeworkers in North London</b> "The rate of pay is 12½ pence for sewing a simple dress." An investigation by a women's liberation group into sweated labour.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Music         | 43 | <b>Frankie Armstrong</b> examines sound in relation to women, particularly in the field of traditional folk music.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Arts          | 46 | <b>Spare Parts: How to Rent Women's Films</b> Nancy Platt lists what films are available and how to hire them.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |



# LETTERS

## Thanks

Dear Spare Rib,  
Many thanks to everyone who has sent me a copy of Spare Rib 25, to complete my collection. I am busy leaving the surplus copies in doctors' waiting-rooms and other places where women seem to be kept waiting most of their lifetime. It's not as easy as it sounds though - I've been followed for half a block by well-meaning people, panting, 'Here, you've left your magazine, dear'.  
love,  
Suzanne Perkins,  
London W10.

## Appeal For Kids' Books

Could we please make an urgent appeal to anybody who has children's books that they no longer have a need for to send them to us. As part of our campaign for better and more relevant books for children we are preparing various visual aids which will incorporate examples of the stereo-typing of females (i.e. always in an apron), race and class bias. Never mind if you are not sure if the books you have feature these points, just ring us or write and we will collect them from you if you no longer need them.

Many thanks.  
Jo Spence  
Childrens Rights Workshop Book Project  
73 Balfour St.  
London SE17.

ELSE: "MOTHER, IF I MARRY WHEN I GROW UP, SHALL I GET A HUSBAND LIKE FATHER?"  
MOTHER: "YES, DARLING."  
ELSIE: "AND IF I DON'T MARRY, SHALL I BE AN OLD MAID LIKE AUNT JANE?"  
MOTHER: "YES, DARLING!"  
ELSIE: "GOLLY, I AM IN A MESS!"



## Control over our bodies

Dear Spare Rib,  
In reply to Kate Hill's letter (SR 31), regarding discrimination against women by employers because of the possibility that we might get pregnant, I disagree that 'women have the choice to have children'... 'with all the contraceptives available to her...' Unless we totally abstain from sexual intercourse and can guarantee the abolition of rape, we cannot say that we will not become pregnant in the first few weeks of a new job. Until contraception is effective and reliable for all women, abortion free on demand and the social pressures around childbearing removed, it is not realistic to say that we have a choice whether or not to have children.

Employers use any excuse to discriminate against us as women, and saying that we are unreliable because of our child-bearing/rearing role is particularly vicious. However we should be questioning the employer as to why he has not provided child care, so that women can work, whether or not they bear children.

We must not be trapped into arguing that we can control our bodies. This only leads to continued discrimination against women labelled 'irresponsible' when they have children they can't support, they are judged on the assumption that women have the power not to conceive.  
In sisterhood,  
Liz Durkin,  
Luton.

## Social work - a conservative force

Dear Spare Rib,  
Reading 'Apples, Umbrellas and What Next?' and the article on women teachers in special education - SR 31; I was prompted to write down some of my own feelings on social work. For 14 months I worked as a Probation Officer in the Midlands. I moved to Leeds with the intention of attending a social work course at the university, sponsored by the Home Office. The break between leaving work and starting the course gave me time to consider in depth the position of the social worker and the uncomfortable feelings the work had given rise to. Essentially I think social work is

a conservative force, and this probably goes for any social system that has state employed social workers. They are there to help people cope with the system. Fundamental change is not what social work is about. For a long time I tried to convince myself that I could help people, that aspects of the work that I didn't like could be changed. In fact I was helping people adjust to life outside prison, and supervising offenders (some of whose crimes were appallingly insignificant compared to the brutality engendered by many work situations). Working on an individual or group level does little to stop people going to prison or change the capitalist system of employment. Indeed, I would go so far as to say that it sustains society's norms by helping people to adjust rather than leaving things to get worse and perhaps precipitate change.

It was my experience that the seemingly most 'liberal' social workers were most concerned to see 'professionally trained' as the only way into social work. It's galling to think the professionally trained people are needed to help the elderly, the lonely etc., we should all do our share. Probation Officers and Social Service workers have a great deal of power, both legal and social - they may be reluctant to use this, but I wonder if one can really identify with a client who's in conflict with a system you're paid to maintain? Women, presumably because of their conditioning and role as mothers are particularly suited to the position of care and control which is the basis of most social work.

One other point I would like to make is on the attitude to 'sex offenders'. Psychology sees the offence in terms of the individual, as does social work. But what of the wider implications - women are often treated as sex objects, and in books/magazines portrayed as somehow liking brutal sex; they are also socially and legally second class citizens still. The evidence coming from the States is that contrary to popular belief many rapists a) knew their victim b) planned an assault c) were not overcome by uncontrollable urges.

In sisterhood,  
Jan Straw.  
Leeds.

## Our politics are part of our actions

Dear Spare Rib,  
The article 'Women and their treatment in psychiatry'. Spare Rib 31 typified some of the attitudes prevalent in the women's movement and voiced by Spare Rib. (I can't afford to buy Spare Rib at 30p and was given two copies after writing about the claimants union movement and then I had to ask). I am a working class woman, active in Brixton women's centre, which is a self-help local community centre. The centre is active out of necessity and a need to control our own lives, mainly in housing, legal advice and the claimants union. We are angry at being oppressed by these agencies and we need to fight back. The centre is not male dominated neither is it dominated by middle class women or professionals who talk in terms of theories and politics. Our politics are part of our actions. It is because of this that our actions are direct and positive. Squatters are solving their own homelessness, battered women - women's aid centres etc. The professionals - doctors, social workers, lawyers, local government officials go to conferences and talk about us and our problems and the way they can teach us to solve our problems.

I feel that a section of the women's movement have fallen into the same trap - working class women are fed up of the middle class women telling us about our oppression and the need for liberation.

Why at the conference on psychiatry was a male doctor talking about battered women? Do we not think that women who have been battered and done something about it can speak with more accuracy and perception? Also why were there no patients present, I would think that the professionals have a lot to learn from the patients.

Margot Waddell says, 'the root of many women's problems? - inarticulacy, inferiority'... The working class women of Brixton who are taking action, are none of these things, even though people who are afraid of our non-professional strength and anger often try to oppress us by telling us we are. I think the root of women's problems are the male professionals (and the women who compete in the same way as men) who stuff us with pills and tell us we are neurotic, when we cannot cope any longer with lousy housing, a pittance on the SS, or an oppressive relationship.

Teena Gould,  
120 Railton Road,  
Brixton, SE24.



## COMPLETE YOUR SET OF RIBS

- No.5** – Family Everafter –  
Micheline Wandor on the family  
structure ...
- No.6** – What the Revolution has  
done for women in Cuba ...  
Epidurals ...
- No.8** – John Berger's unpublished  
notes for G ... Abortion, all the  
facts ...
- No.9** – Women in China ...  
Spare Parts on laying floor boards  
and tiles ...
- No.10** – Tanya, the only woman  
who fought with Che Guevara ...  
Bisexuality ...
- No.11** – Equal Pay, what the  
Hell's going on? ... How we  
rolled the Stones ...
- No.12** – Sylvia Plath, unknown  
short story ... 'Woman and  
Madness' ...
- No.14** – Are children loved  
enough, too little or too much –  
maternal deprivation reassessed ...
- No.16** – Jane Fonda interview  
... Karate ... Self help therapy ...
- No.18** – How the female religion  
was stamped out ... Choosing  
the right analyst ... sex shops ...
- No.19** – 'Down Among The  
Women' Fay Weldon's novel ...  
Vaginal Politics ...
- No.20** – List of Women's Centres  
... film about women's vaginas  
... Illiteracy – whose problem?
- No.24** Non-sexist kids books ...  
Wedlocked women ... pre-  
menstrual tension ...
- No.26** – History of the Housewife  
... Being a woman doctor ...  
Women militants in 'Portuguese'  
Africa ...
- No.27** – Mountain Women Blues  
... Working Women's Charter ...  
Schizophrenia ...
- No.28** – Why women starve  
themselves ... Talking to  
Police women ... Bridget St.  
John ...
- No.29** – Contraceptive Con ...  
Women workers ... Sex and self  
hate ...
- No.30** – Baby sling offer ...  
Hysterectomy ... Consciousness  
raising ...
- No.31** – Equal pay at SEI ...  
Self help groups ... History of  
women in music ...
- No.32** – Angela Davis ... Sheila  
Hancock ... Dory Previn ...  
Pill Report ...

Please circle the numbers  
that you want and send 35p  
each (postage and packing  
included) to Spare Ribs Ltd,  
9 Newburgh Street, London  
W1A 4XS.

Name

Address

# IF YOU HAVE DIFFICULTY FINDING

*spare*  
**Rib**

# OR

Name

Address

Please reserve a copy of  
*Spare Rib* every month, starting  
with Issue No.34, publication  
date: March 26, 1975.

Distributor:  
Moore Harness,  
31 Corsica Street,  
London N5.

Why not fill in the coupon and hand it to your newsagent

Take out a subscription



Name

Address

A subscription for one year. (12 issues) is £4.44 payable  
to Spare Ribs Ltd, 9 Newburgh Street, London W1A 4XS.



# SHORTLIST

Compiled by Jill Nicholls. Please send any information to Shortlist, Spare Rib, 9 Newburgh St, London W1A 4XS.

## events

**Sexism and Education conference** at Nottingham Teachers' Centre, Cranmer St, from 10.30 to 6.00pm on Saturday March 1st. Proposed workshops include

- women and the teaching unions
  - the production of non-sexist school books and teaching materials
  - equal opportunities in relation to school curriculum, training and apprenticeship schemes
  - working women's charter
  - education and gay oppression
  - sex education
- Creche and accommodation available for Fri/Sat.

**Women in China:** day school on March 2nd, 1–6pm (repeat of November's school). Write for details and ticket, enclosing 30p and sae, to the Society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding, 152 Camden High St, London NW1 (01-485 8236).

**International Week of Feminist Action on Abortion**, result of a resolution at the Frankfurt Congress, will be centred in Switzerland, March 2nd to 8th: after the Italian trial of 260 women charged with having had abortions, and before the Swiss Parliamentary discussion to tighten up existing abortion laws. Suggestions to RINA, MLF case postal 111, 1227 Carouge GE Switzerland.

### Women in Engineering

The Women's Engineering Society are holding a one-day conference for young engineers at Imperial College on March 8th. The theme: 'How to survive as a woman engineer'. A fee of 45p will cover a buffet lunch and tea. Anyone interested should contact Linda Mitchell, 29 Beechwood Ave, Melton Mowbray, Leics.

### International Women's Day

In Bristol on March 8th there's a day of action, as yet unspecified. Contact the Women's Centre, 11 Waverley Rd, Bristol 6 (tel. 38120).

A march is being planned for London. Contact the workshop, 38 Earlham St, WC2.

## projects

**Amnesty International** plans to hold a conference in October for women's organisations to highlight the cases of women under torture in 90 countries. Two such cases are Elsa Rudolphi, a Chilean actress, permanently deaf in one ear from torture, and Lydia Falcon, a Spanish feminist and lawyer, accused of assisting in the assassination in Carrerro; beaten and subjected to sensory deprivation, she is still awaiting trial.

The first planning meeting is on April 8th. Phone Deirdre Abell, 01-954 5011, for further information.

### International Tribunal of Crimes against Women

This denunciation will be held some time this year, International Women's Year. The idea is to collect crimes from every country, historical examples, and contemporary victims to give evidence in person.

England's national planning meeting, open to anyone interested, is on March 1st at the workshop, London. It will decide which cases to take to the international planning meeting in late March, and consider suggesting London as a possible place for the tribunal. The project needs money, especially for fares for Third World women. More information from the workshop, 38 Earlham St, London WC2.

### CLAP — Community Levy for Alternative Projects

CLAP raises money "to support projects in Britain which are too imaginative or revolutionary to get money from the regular sources." These include several women's centres and gay centres. If you want to give or receive money, send 14½p in stamps for the latest handbook to CLAP c/o BIT, 146 Great Western Road, London W11.

### ISIS — a women's international information and communication service

ISIS, a service for women and women's groups around the world, hopes to make communication between countries and continents easier by collecting and disseminating information on issues of concern to women.

It's based on a unique information storage and retrieval

system which can answer both quite general questions — what do we know about abortion laws in Spain? — and more specific questions — are there any groups working on video-tape productions about women and health in Borneo?

Before ISIS can operate fully it needs information (medical, educational, political, what women are doing and how, as well as official statistics about the status of women). So please send newsletters, magazines, newspaper cuttings, tapes, photos etc. to ISIS, C.P. 301, 1227 Carouge, Switzerland.

## posters

**See Red Women's Workshop** is at 18 Camden Rd, London NW1. Their poster workshop is at 30 Camden Rd. They will provide visual material for women's publications and groups, and would like to receive any images, past, present and future, which indicate the position of women in society today.

Any woman interested is welcome to go round and meet them, to use their facilities and learn printing methods. Or ring:

|             |          |
|-------------|----------|
| Pru         | 267 2309 |
| Suzie       | 720 4746 |
| Julia       | 720 4746 |
| Christine   | 272 3252 |
| Michael Ann | 607 4728 |
| Margaret    | 226 7615 |

**Big bright posters from Brighton** include SPUC off 15p, Parity begins at home 45p, Free castration on demand 40p, Women are revolting 25p; p&p 15p each; all 20" by 30". Reductions for bulk orders;

special orders for fund-raising, demonstrations etc. Write to Pen Dalton, 26 South Ave, Brighton, Sussex.

## arts

### Women's Theatre Group My Mother Says I Never Should . . .

is a play with songs about the sexual contradictions facing teenage girls. It's aimed at 14–18 year olds in schools, colleges and youth clubs. A 50 minute show followed by discussion. Available for touring, it can be booked for Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and weekends. Contact Lyn Ashley, 25 Clifton Hill, London NW8 (01-624 5343) or Mica Nava, 29 Netherhall Gdns, London NW3 (01-794 2445).

See music section this issue, and reviews next.

### Camera Obscured? Perspectives on contemporary British Photography

A series of seminars from January 27th to June 30th including, on April 28th, *Women in Photography*. For further information contact the Half Moon Gallery, 27 Alie St, London E1 (01-480 6465).

### Women's Lives

This exhibition of paintings by Monica Sjoo and Anna Siodahl will be on show in Stockholm February 15th to March 15th, along with work by other Scandinavian feminist artists, and a programme of women's films, music etc. In March it will go to North Sweden, and in May to Helsinki.



It's not that I'm illogical or slow — it's just that my thoughts are complicated...



# pamphlets

'Equality for women'  
The NCCL's comments on  
the Labour Government's  
proposals for Anti-  
Discrimination legislation —  
and their own proposals for  
action. Price 20p.

This report lists earlier laws  
for women,

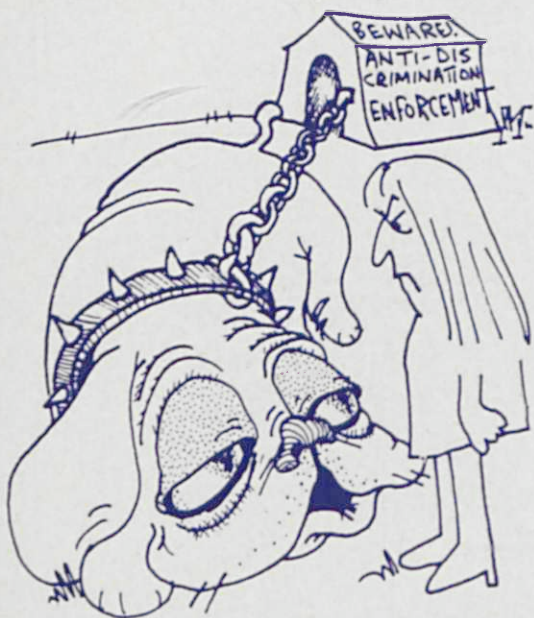
considered, and positive  
discrimination comes up in a  
detailed discussion of the  
enforcement proposals, and  
possible improvements on  
them.

The report is as precise  
and pointed as its cartoons.  
It mentions in passing that  
Northern Ireland is omitted  
from the proposals, and that  
the armed services and  
churches are exceptions to



summarises and discusses the  
Labour Government's  
proposals in *Equality for  
Women*, and looks at the ways  
the Anti-Discrimination law  
will be enforced. It also  
summarises and comments  
on proposals for maternity  
leave and pension schemes,  
and suggests ways we could  
all campaign for a better bill.  
The crucial question of  
protective legislation is

the rules. Throughout it  
counters probable objections  
simply and straightforwardly  
— answering for instance  
the standard "freedom of  
choice" line against single  
sex schools with the case of  
Muslim parents who wanted  
a single sex school on  
religious grounds, but  
couldn't afford to pay for  
one; their choice was denied  
by the LEA.



**Quest: A Feminist Quarterly**  
The second issue of this  
magazine, which came out  
last autumn in the USA,  
arrived at *Spare Rib* with a  
request for an exchange sub-  
scription. However it's easy  
to be indifferent when you're  
surrounded by mounds of  
feminist literature, so I sifted  
through it and aimlessly  
began an article about the US  
therapy industry.

Lethargy vanished.  
*Insanity and Control: A class  
trap* is by a working class  
lesbian ex-mental patient  
called Alice Quinn. Listen to  
what she is saying: "Another  
radical rip-off that denies  
the experience of lower and  
working class women as ex-  
mental patients, is the  
popular notion that going  
crazy is a positive growth  
experience."

This article had become  
mesmerising because it was  
dismantling both the roman-  
ticism with which freakin'  
out has recently surrounded  
itself and the cool which  
would define desperation as a  
superior way of being.

Writing about state mental  
hospitals with anger and  
passion: "Spend a few months  
on the back ward with its  
smashed windows, filthy  
excrement-covered walls, and  
its women lying asleep on hall-  
way floors from over-medication.  
Watch women scream in  
horror, tormented by hallucina-  
tions, or sitting immobilized by  
depression."

*Quest* is available at \$10.00  
overseas subscription (four  
issues) from P.O. Box 8843,  
Washington DC, 20003, USA,  
or at \$2.00 an issue. Number 2  
also contained poems, an inter-  
view about the Los Angeles  
Feminist Clinic, and a critique  
of the recently formed  
Coalition of Labour Union  
Women. Plans for future issues  
include women and spirituality,  
future visions and fantasies,  
theories of revolution.

Ann Scott

## Some Thoughts on Feminist Art

"I feel a little dubious about  
your great Earth-mother  
thing, perhaps because I  
don't feel an Earth-mother  
kind of woman, but I agree  
with you about Nature. In  
fact, this is where I part  
company with Marxism.  
Marxism as I understand it is  
about man conquering nature,  
as part of the 'man must  
control his environment'  
thesis. Yeah, sounds to me  
like a masculine trip."

However there's a smash-  
ing piece by Ann Berg about  
the problems of being female  
at an abstractionist art  
school, and of being a female  
artist with children and a  
marriage. Price 15p from  
Monica Sjö, 18 Beaufort  
Rd, Bristol 8, or the  
Women's Centre, 11 Waverley  
Rd, Bristol 6, or the  
Workshop, 38 Earlam St,  
London WC2.

## Women and Work: a review Women and Work: Over-eas Practice

HMSO Department of Employ-  
ment, Manpower Papers 11 and  
12, 71p and £1 respectively.  
These are the third and fourth  
of a series of four pamphlets on  
women at work produced  
recently by the Department of  
Employment.

The first of these two has  
information on aspects of the

employment of women not  
covered very substantially in  
the statistical survey (reviewed  
last month) — attitudes and  
behaviour of employers and  
women employees, training,  
performance, and some  
discussion of part-time work.

The second has a short  
comparison of the employment  
situation and legislation  
concerning women at work in  
Britain with that in other  
industrialised countries. This  
includes allowances for mater-  
nity leave, and a detailed  
description of government  
actions (legislative and  
educational) in the US, Canada  
and Sweden.

These books both seem to  
provide a lot of evidence just to  
show things which many  
women in the movement have  
been saying for a long time. For  
example, that employers are  
often unsympathetic to the  
special needs of women, such  
as the need for childcare  
facilities, unless they are really  
short of workers.

On the other hand, although  
the books do not make many  
general points which are  
particularly surprising, they  
do include a lot of information  
about the topics covered which  
until now has not easily been  
found without a lot of research.  
So they would probably be  
very useful to anyone looking  
for evidence of women's  
inferior position and opportuni-  
ties in employment.

**LINK** is the Communist Party  
women's journal, out quarterly.  
The latest issue is on childcare  
— *Who's minding the baby?*  
Available from Central Books,  
37 Grays Inn Road, London  
WC1. Price 10p.

# films

## Daddy

A *Spare Rib* benefit  
Peter Whitehead and Niki de  
St. Phalle explore the  
daughter-father relationship.  
In fantasy and flashback the  
daughter's interaction with  
her father is traced from  
when she is five years old  
until as an adult she takes her  
revenge and humiliates him.  
People have objected to  
ideas and attitudes expressed  
in the film, and there will be  
time set aside for discussion  
immediately after the  
showing.

At the Electric Cinema,  
191 Portobello Road,  
London W11, on March 2nd  
at 2pm.





We believe that all women have the right to control their own bodies and the right to choose – to have or not to have children. For this reason the women's movement has campaigned for free contraception and free and safe abortion for women who want it. Over the past two years this demand has been plucked out of our hands by those who believe that birth control is only useful as a means to population control. The danger is that our demand will be used against us, to muffle the voice of women demanding freedom of choice.

Organisations like the Family Planning Association have provided the basis for the birth control facilities we have in this country. But they are also campaigning for population control, along with groups like Birth Control Campaign, Doctors and Overpopulation, Friends of the Earth, Population Countdown, Population Stabilisation, Conservative Society, Environmental Communicators Organisation. These groups blame poverty, underdevelopment, shortage of social services, food and resources, even unemployment, on excess population.

We do not believe that population is the *cause* of the social ills of our society, nor that lowering population growth will, in itself, solve existing social problems either here or in the third world. In this issue of *Spare Rib*, Germaine Greer puts a feminist case against enforced population control, and against the blackmail of the third world whereby only those countries which agree to birth control programmes will be offered food aid.

At the same time, women here often find they are not free to choose to be sterilised. Women who want to be sterilised may find they are refused and women who do not, may find themselves under pressure. Sue O'Sullivan describes sterilisation, and gives the experiences of some women who made this decision.



# "Between the extremes stands the individual woman, whose womb has become a vehicle of government policy."

Germaine Greer

Only a few years have passed since women first took to the streets to assert their right to control their own fertility. To some, that battle may seem to have been almost won. Free family planning advice is widely available. Abortions are gradually becoming easier to get, even if they are still unnecessarily traumatic, still cost far too much and are subject to too much interference and bureaucratic control. This very circumstance should awaken our suspicions.

We have used no force or coercion to bring about acceptance of our demand for the means to control our own fertility. Our oppressors have not put such means within our grasp because we wished to have them, but because they, our oppressors, wished us to have them. Our rulers simply decided that what we were shouting for on the streets was in their own interests. Permitted contraception and abortion simply indicate that our rulers find population control a congenial idea. The day that they change their minds, contraception and abortion will be as inaccessible as they ever were, in fact more so, for we will have forgotten all the self-help know-how of former generations of women.

The crucial issue, that of the individual woman's right to choose her own reproductive destiny has been recognised by no enactment, by no precedent in law or in practice. We are still manipulated according to the plans that others have made for us, as any childless woman who desires a sterilisation is only too aware.

Now that the rulers of the world have taken up the notion of global population limitation, the battle for the right to control our own bodies may now have to take on a different form. Where once our banners read "Free Abortion on Demand" in large letters, and "No Forced Sterilisation" in much smaller ones, we may find that we have to reverse the emphasis. We may have to struggle for the right to be pregnant, and pregnant as often as we want to be — especially if we are unemployed, unmarried or have no A-levels. The ways in which the right to be pregnant can be eroded are many; they range from the "advice" of a doctor, to his taking matters entirely into his own hands, as in cases where doctors performing abortions on girls whom they considered "mentally retarded" seized the opportunity to sterilise them. Social and bureaucratic pressures can vary from counselling (which will eventually include genetic counselling) to the kind of coercion suggested by various law projects in America, in which it is suggested that welfare payments be denied any poor mother of four children if she will not accept sterilisation (which is already the practice in Singapore).

Many women are convinced that there are too many people in the world, nevertheless no feminist can allow forcible abortion or compulsory sterilisation of women who are not convinced that it is their moral duty to deny themselves wanted children. The principle at stake, that of control over one's own body, is an integral and essential part of feminism. No act of faith in the oracles of demography can over-rule it.

Women who reject the fashionable convictions about "over-population" are not irrational or immoral; the case has not been proved, and even if it had been it would not justify wholesale interference in the reproductive behaviour of the individual.

There is a world food shortage, to be sure, but when one quarter of the world's population wolfs eighty-five percent of the world's resources, the food shortage can at once be seen to be owing primarily to an appallingly unjust economic (and hence political) system. This system is actually reducing the productivity of the world by raising the costs of modern agriculture. Megadeaths from hunger will affect all the demographers' projections for the year 2000, meanwhile people suffer from oppression, not from their own reproductive irresponsibility. The ones most sinned against are the

ones who will oblige us by dying, leaving our ghastly, gargantuan lifestyle to flourish unchecked, except by its own poisonous wastes.

Western complacency wishes to be spared the spectacle of the deaths of thousands of women and children; besides, famines lead to unrest and the overthrow of established authority. People with nothing to lose are terribly dangerous, so it is perfectly understandable that the imperialist countries would prefer that the poor would cease to be born.

In countries where the infant mortality rate has fallen because of imperialist medicine and therefore may as quickly rise again; where death in early childhood from starvation is an ever more probable possibility, and where there is no provision for old age except a surviving son or two (for females have no financial independence) it is crass to assume that large families are not desirable. The failure of "voluntary" birth control policies in these countries was utterly predictable. Yet that failure, directly caused by the ignorance and insensitivity of the planners of other people's families could be avenged by *compulsory* birth control programmes.

All fascism assumes a state of fictitious emergency, a threat of invasion, of civil war, of the black and yellow hordes taking over. The new fascism relies upon a phantasmagoric view of the future as universal Calcutta.

Many of the nations who paid lip service to the idea of a rational population policy at last year's UN conference in Bucharest, actually promote birth in their own countries by denying women access to family planning amenities (as for example the host country itself, Rumania). Between the extremes of national chauvinism and international hypocrisy stands the individual woman, whose womb has become a vehicle of government policy. The name of feminism itself has been co-opted in the service of her manipulation and persecution. Isaac Asimov declared that in view of the seriousness of the population situation, "women's lib" would no longer be the priority of a "splinter group of activists" but "the settled and serious policy of society as a whole". "Liberation" would be forced on women whether they wanted it or not. International Women's Year was, the pundits opined, the logical outcome of World Population Year.

Feminists cannot accept crude numerological analyses of the behaviour of women who have never spoken in the first person in their lives. They cannot permit the dissemination of a crude and misleading view of feminism as an ideology opposed to childbearing and the family. Within our own countries we are the unexplored, undeveloped, speechless population, systematically undeveloped by our conquistadorial society. We are the 'third world' at home; we must represent the alien population beyond the factitious boundaries of states; bamboozled, manipulated and exploited by the same forces that have held us face downward over the lavatory bowl and the sink. That any superpower should give the name women's liberation to the boot that he is preparing to place upon the necks of third world women ought to call forth the most appalling exhibition of women's rage that the world has yet seen ■

*A set of notes produced by a women's liberation group on the relation between population control and a woman's right to choose can be obtained from Spare Rib.*

*'A Woman's Right To Choose' is a new campaign launched by the Abortion Law Reform Association, to call for abortion on request to be available to every British woman within 12 weeks of pregnancy. "We believe that until women can control their own fertility they cannot attain true social and economic equality." The ALRA address is 186 Kings Cross Road, London WC1X 9DE, telephone 01-278 4575.*



# sterilization

Sue O'Sullivan describes the available methods of female sterilization, and the reactions of doctors and hospitals to a woman's request for it.

Over the last six months Spare Rib has received many letters about sterilization. Sue followed these letters up. She has been sterilized herself, and also includes the experiences of five women, especially when asking the question, 'How does it feel to be sterilized? How does it alter your life?'

Charts and diagrams can remain unreal abstractions. I know for myself that, until working on this article, I didn't really spend the energy necessary to transfer those nice, clear pictures to me, to my own sexual and reproductive organs. I suggest you take a look at the drawings because they will help to clarify what goes on in female sterilization. All those interacting processes — organs, muscles, glands, bones, uterus, vagina, ovaries, fallopian tubes, chemicals, nerves, blood and guts. Look down — it's all in that very compact, defined area.

In *Vasectomy and Sterilization* by Clive Wood, the author discusses some of the many methods which have been used to sterilize women. Since 1919, when the first widely used sterilization operation was performed by a Doctor Madlener, almost all methods have depended on the cutting or blocking of the fallopian tubes. The reason is clear. 'In a fertile woman, once every month, an egg is shed from one of her ovaries, and it enters one or other of her fallopian tubes — paired tubes about ten centimetres long (about four inches) which, in effect, connect the ovary to the womb or uterus, where the egg, if fertilized, will grow and develop into a child. It is to these tubes themselves that the sperms migrate in their upward passage through the female reproductive tract, and it is within the tubes that fertilization takes place.' So in the sterilization operations, the tubes are blocked artificially, and sterility is the result. When the fallopian tube is severed, the operation is known as a 'tubectomy'.

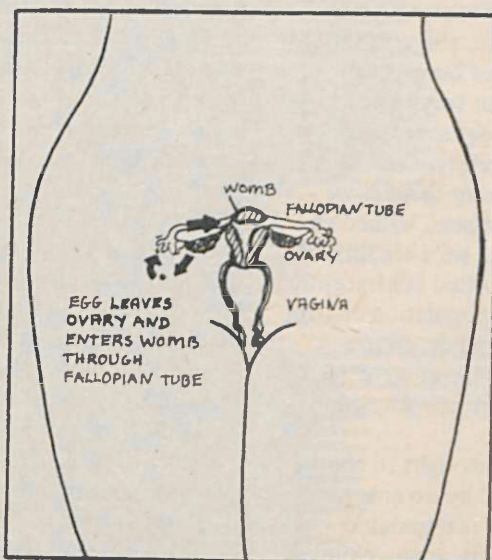
In traditional forms of sterilization, an incision is made in the abdominal wall so the tubes can be crushed and/or severed, or tied off. In this last case, there is an extremely slight chance of a tubal pregnancy and anyone having this operation should ask their doctor and hospital to explain fully. A variation on cutting the tubes and tying off each end is to cut them, and embed the end closest to the uterus in the adjacent tissue and stitch it in place. Apparently tubal pregnancies do not occur after this operation. These methods of sterilization are 'major surgical procedures'. They all involve the use of a general anaesthetic; in all cases the patient has to stay in hospital for a number of days, and in each of them it is necessary to make a fair-sized incision in order to delve into the abdominal cavity. Today the dangers of such an operation are not great. They nonetheless exist.<sup>1</sup>

The alternatives to the 'traditional' forms of female sterilization have only recently become available in Britain. In fact, some women still have difficulty in getting one of the newer methods in their hospitals, even though there are very real advantages to be gained in the 'new' methods.

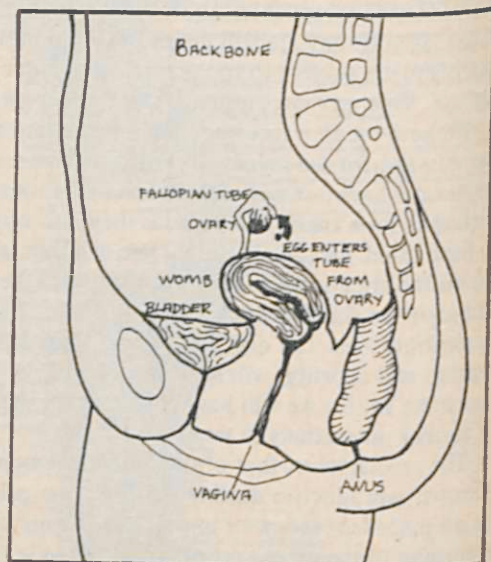
## Laparoscopy, the new method.

### POSITION OF REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM IN BODY

FRONT VIEW



SIDE VIEW



The most common alternative is the laparoscopy technique. The instrument used in this operation is a fibre-optic telescope. This narrow tube 'is inserted through a small incision in the (unconscious) woman's abdomen, and the tubes are visually located and then cauterized (burned) with a small instrument entered through another incision.'<sup>2</sup> These incisions are under an inch. In some cases both sets of instruments are inserted through the fibre-optic system — resulting in one incision. The exact procedure differs from hospital to hospital.

The operation involves holding the fallopian tube with a small instrument, sending an electrical current through it which cauterizes the tube. The cauterized tube is severed, and each end is again cauterized to prevent bleeding and the possibility of the tubes joining up again. The process is repeated on the other tube. The two, or sometimes one, tiny incisions are closed with a surgical clip or a few stitches and the operation is complete.

Sometimes a sterilization may be done through the vagina. An incision is made in the upper wall of the vagina, the tubes are pulled through and cut or severed. This form of sterilization, although practised widely in other countries, does not seem to be as widely available in Britain. This method may be used at the time of an abortion.

One distinctive aspect of the laparoscopy technique is the necessity to pump gas (usually carbon dioxide) into the abdominal cavity. This is necessary in order to 'float' the organs so that the surgeon can see them more separately and not bunched up together and thus manoeuvre the instruments safely. She or he can also

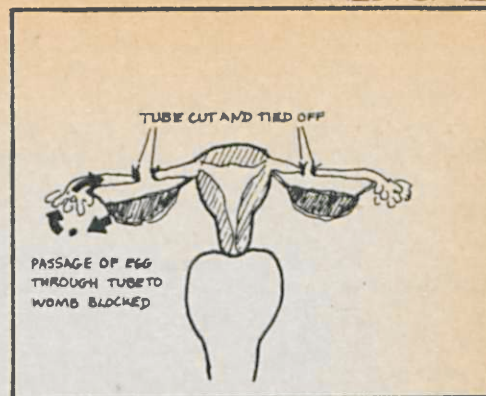
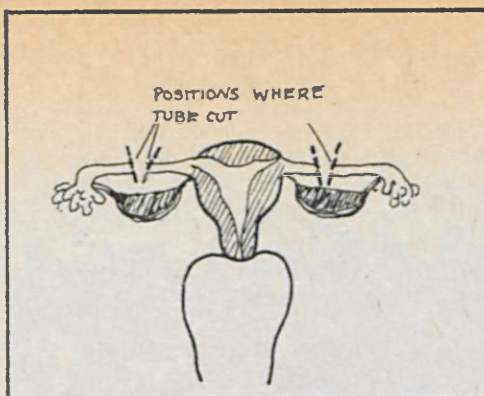
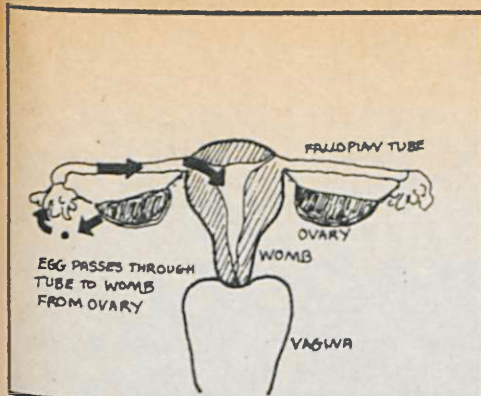
look at the pelvic organs in general to be sure there are no signs of any 'inflammatory disease which might be made worse as a result of the surgery.'<sup>3</sup> Also, an instrument may be inserted through the vagina and cervical canal in order to push the uterus from side to side as each fallopian tube is 'done'. The woman may also be tilted with her head down so that the digestive organs will move away from the uterus. In Britain this is all done under a general anaesthesia, although it can be carried out under local anaesthesia together with sedatives. This happens more often in the United States where, of course, there is no National Health system. There it is an out-patient procedure for those women who cannot afford to stay in hospital. The authorities may decide to accelerate the use of the out-patient procedure, arguing that the easiest method is the best method. In fact, it is often necessary for women being sterilized to stay in hospital. Because the women cannot pay to do so, the argument goes that it is not important for them to do so. Economics are the real motive, and not the health and care of the patient. In China, this operation is often carried out with acupuncture anaesthesia.

In any case, sterilization by the laparoscopy technique is itself not much quicker than the more traditional one. However, the recovery rate is much quicker and the average stay in hospital is 48 hours in total.

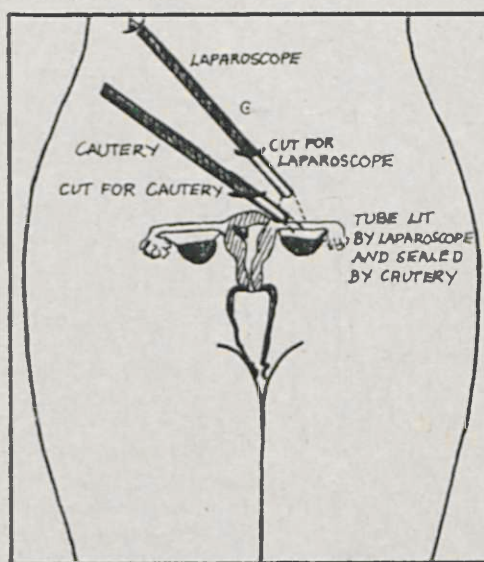
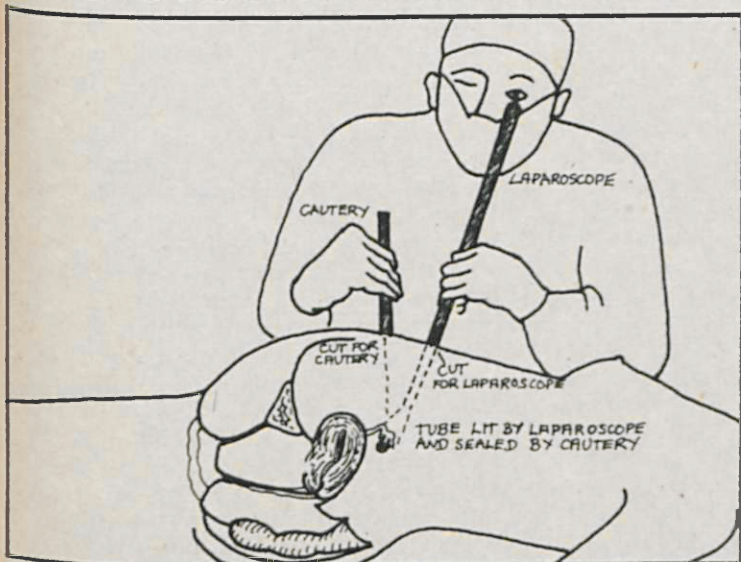
## Hospital, and a woman's chances to have the type of operation she wants.

Well, who gets what kind of sterilization? In fact, you take your chances if you do not specify exactly what you want and stick to it. One year ago Kathy was sent





## STANDARD STERILISATION: TUBECTOMY VIA ABDOMINAL INCISION



## LAPAROSCOPY: SIDE VIEW

## FRONT VIEW

Illustrations by Carole Driver

to the consultant at a North London hospital by her doctor to discuss her request for sterilization. Although she had made it clear that she wished to be sterilized by laparoscopy, she soon discovered that this hospital either did not, or would not offer it to her. She stuck to her guns and eventually found her way to a teaching hospital, also in North London, where she got what she asked for. Some years previously, at another North London hospital, Barbara had requested sterilization using the laparoscopy technique and was told she could have it. Only by chance, when left alone in the consultant's office, she read her medical notes and discovered she was down for a tubal ligation with no mention whatsoever of laparoscopy. When she challenged the man he said he didn't know how to perform that operation and, anyway, he thought she wanted to be sterilized. She persisted with her demand for laparoscopy or nothing and eventually discovered that there was someone in the hospital who did know how to perform the operation and was willing to as well. I went to the same teaching hospital as Kathy and also had no problem in being sterilized by the laparoscopy technique there, since they perform the majority of sterilizations using this method. Obviously the situation differs from hospital to hospital. It is best to know what you want and to know that there are places where you can get what you want, even when the first hospital says they can't give it to you. Don't let them bully you, either.

The difference between hysterectomy and sterilization.

In *Spare Rib* No.30, Jean Robinson wrote about hysterectomy, and drew out some of the problems she saw in that operation. Many women who just want to be sterilized end up with hysterectomies – enough women to cause concern to anyone who is contemplating sterilization. The difference between a straight forward sterilization and a hysterectomy are great. In sterilization for permanent contraceptive purposes, only the tubes are interfered with. The ovaries remain, as do the other organs. After such an operation you ovulate, but, instead of the egg being expelled, it is blocked in the tube and disintegrates. The broken-down eggs are reabsorbed into the body. Because some important hormonal processes are triggered off by ovulation, and it is the removal of, or damage to, the ovaries which has been suggested as the cause of the physical and emotional disturbances in women, it seems that it is a much more serious and questionable operation if it is not genuinely needed.

### Sexual Politics and sterilization.

I would like to mention one of the general political problems which has come up in any discussion of sterilization. Much has been written, particularly in the United States, about forced sterilization. This issue has been raised particularly about poor, black women who have been sterilized without their knowledge or consent. It is also well known that Third World women have been used as guinea pigs in American trials for the pill. These trials were carried out mainly in Puerto Rico by American research. It is interesting that Clive Wood, in the book I quoted before, says, 'In such

disparate countries of the world as Pakistan and Korea, Puerto Rico and Australia, sterilizing operations are also available either from private surgeons or as part of an overall population control programme. Indeed, Puerto Rico may well lead the world. As long ago as 1965 it seems that one in every three Puerto Rican women between the ages of 20 and 49 had already had the operation.'

In this country the situation is probably subtler. The virtually compulsory sterilizations described by the women's movement in America do not seem to exist, but hospitals *do* pressure working class women with more than three children to have a sterilization thrown in with any gynaecological surgery. And the pressure is greater still on West Indian and Asian women. Often this is proposed when a mother is attempting to get a National Health abortion – as part of the deal. It may happen, too, if she has less than three children. A Phillipine woman I know, married with one child, was told she had to be sterilized when she asked for an NHS abortion last year. Suggesting sterilization at that time is gross and insensitive. Suggesting a woman come back in a number of months if she's interested is another thing altogether. No one should have to make the decision to become sterile when she is wanting an abortion. No woman should have the idea anywhere in her head that she needs to agree to sterilization in order to make sure she gets an abortion.

Again, Clive Wood, who represents a politically liberal approach to sterilization, says, 'The number of patients who attend



a hospital or an out-patient clinic for the termination of an unwanted pregnancy is also very much on the increase. For many of these women, the use of reversible methods of contraception has consistently failed. At the time of termination of pregnancy, many of them are highly motivated to avoid such an unwanted occurrence in the future. Sterilization offered at such a time is therefore often gladly accepted. Needless to say, the patient should never be coerced, nor the sterilization made a condition of having her pregnancy terminated, but there is nothing irresponsible in a doctor offering sterilization to a woman who, for medical or social reasons, may acquire a very positive benefit from losing her ability to reproduce.' Has he ever been pregnant and tried to get an abortion on the National Health? Of course there may be very 'liberal' hospitals but there are plenty which aren't, and you have to really sweat to get permission to have an abortion. The days drag by. The appointments seem to take forever. You don't need to make sterilization a condition for having an abortion. Women aren't stupid. If sterilization is suggested by the hospital then it isn't very hard to figure out that if you agree you also get the abortion. You don't need to have any overt coercion, because it's already built into the whole situation.

I have had an abortion, had children, and have been sterilized. All these decisions and/or accidents happened at different periods of my life — at different ages and different circumstances. Every woman must be able to control her own reproductive functions. This slogan is what we women aim for. It's one of our touchstones when we think and struggle around issues such as birth control, abortion, sterilization. And the choice must be seen in terms of being able to choose to have children, to remain fertile, as much as the other way round. I myself fought to be sterilized and I support women who wish to do the same. We must also fight against any attempt to force sterilization on any sister.

### The after effects of sterilization.

There is too, the question of 'after effects'. I have read some books and spoken to doctors about the possibility of any woman being adversely affected either physically or emotionally because of sterilization. The 'experts' seem convinced that there is no direct causal effect. They tend to blame any complaint by a woman who has had a tubectomy on to a crisis of femininity. In a popular book, *Contraception*, by Selig Neubardt, it is stated emphatically, 'Surgical ligation of the tubes is simple, safe, and absolutely without side effects. The results are permanent and protection complete. It in no way effects sensual feelings, behaviour, or appearance.' In a 1966 *Which* pamphlet on contraceptives, the report on sterilization says, 'Neither sterilization of the man nor of the woman need have any effect on their ability to enjoy love-making, have intercourse or reach a climax . . . but some people feel 'different' for a long time afterwards, as though something had happened to make them less of a man or woman. This is a purely emotional reaction — and

unpredictable — but may be quite distressing.'

I have written and talked to some women who see the root of their problems as the after effects of a tubectomy. The treatment some have received from their GPs has been unfortunate to say the least. But of course, we know about the tendency in the male dominated medical profession to call specifically female complaints 'purely emotional' and then brush them off as neurotic.

### Five women's experiences of sterilization.

Here are some of the different ways women have experienced sterilization:

#### Margaret

Margaret wrote to *Spare Rib*, 'The reason for my sterilization was my third caesarian operation. Apparently they do not like to do four and, as I was then 35 years, they said it would be a risk, and as I do not believe in the pill, my husband and I gave it a great deal of thought. As they had to operate anyway, this seemed the ideal way.' Later on she says, 'At the time of the operation I could not believe I had been sterilized, so I kept asking and finally one of the young doctors told me that if I did fall again, it would have a long way to jump to get connected. I assume by this the tube is cut.'

Margaret began to experience a bad time after sterilization when her third child was 18 months old. 'I could tell you the exact day I began feeling ill. Well, I know now it is illness. At the time I thought it was because with three children and having to cope with having polio since I was a child, I thought everything was too much.' She could not sleep, felt terrible but resisted going to a doctor for months. 'In the finish I had to give in, I came home with my first bottle of sleeping pills. From then until now I have had to be a regular patient going onto strong drugs and finally I now go to a nerve specialist at the hospital once a month. At the moment it seems I am just living on pills which I take at night. Nobody understands, not even my husband. He tries but it is like walking along a dark tunnel that has no ending.'

#### Nancy

Nancy was 32 and had two children and she herself decided to be sterilized by laparoscopy. Her experience of actually persuading her doctor and the hospital to carry out the operation was similar to other women I've talked to. 'My doctor listened to my request with barely hidden, faint amusement and then came out with several weak remarks like, "How about the pill? We can get your husband done more easily", and finally, "We would always give you an abortion, you know".' She realized that she had to do more than ask politely, so she marshalled facts and evidence to support her case. In the end, an emotional appeal about a domestic problem won through, and her doctor agreed.

'Battle number two began in earnest when I met Mr M. who was to perform the operation. Again, I was an innocent abroad and thought confidently that my battles were nearly won. After the usual internal examinations and tests Mr M. launched his attack, run on similar lines to the doctor. "It's a waste of the country's money. This is not a needed operation. You're too

young." When he realised that I was not going to move, he used his final weapon.

"A young woman died under the anaesthetic only a week ago. Do you realise the risk." Again the emotional blackmail bit.

'However, he didn't say yes and he didn't say no, so I was sent away to have a think. I must admit that the last comment had scared me, but a few weeks later I had a wisdom tooth removed with the aid of gas and realised then that I could have died. Everything fell into place then and I made another appointment to see Mr M. You really feel a freak, alone in a battle of your own making.'

On the next visit, Mr M.'s attitude was quite different and he agreed to do the operation. This appears to be a technique with some doctors, to see if you can 'prove' in battle that you want the operation. In any case, Nancy waited for over a year until two days before Christmas to be operated on. She found the other patients were very helpful. 'The actual operation was over very quickly with no pain or discomfort at all. My only regret was that I had not tried for it sooner. What amazed me was the number of questions that I was asked in hospital, of the most intimate nature, and yet when I asked for the details of what actually happened during the operation I was sent away like a naughty child — an attitude many nurses seem to delight in over patients. My husband had to sign a form saying that he okayed the operation. This was when he "handed me over", and yet he could have been the milkman for all the hospital knew.'

Nancy has also had a bad time since the operation and, although she has changed to a more sympathetic doctor, she still has hopes that 'It's all in the mind'. Sometimes she feels the same as Margaret, 'At times revulsion at the mere thought of intercourse and, in fact, my mental attitude to everything connected with home, husband, and family.' She says, 'I feel entirely different as a person after this operation. It's as if my brain has been affected and I get unbalanced about small things and worry more than I did.'

#### Christine

Christine is 29 and was sterilized when she was 26. 'My youngest girl is five now. She was my fourth. I wanted to be sterilized when I had her but my husband wouldn't agree. A year later he agreed. There must be agreement on both sides. But the woman has to have the baby, take care of it, so the woman should decide if her husband says no. The hospital did suggest a hysterectomy but I said no. The doctor was quite rude about it but I got quite dogmatic. The only method I knew was tying the tubes. At the hospital he said, "You could have a laparoscopic op." It was 100% better for me.' Christine had no difficulty in getting sterilized. She said that this was because she came from a 'bad marriage and a bad background' and because she was classified as 'a baby a year wife'.

In the hospital they explained exactly what would happen to her. 'They told me in detail. I insisted on knowing, after all, it's my body.' She had only one incision and, as with most women who have a laparoscopy, Christine felt very little discomfort afterwards. She had pains across the



shoulders and chest which is a common after effect, caused by the gas which is pumped into the abdominal cavity and which soon goes, and she felt a bit weak and lazy for a couple of days when she went home.

Christine is unusual because she's had the operation reversed recently and hopes to become pregnant as soon as possible. This is how she explains the reversal and how she perceives the causes and effects. (It is extremely rare to have a sterilization reversed, by the way). 'I had a bad marriage. I had four children and I'd only wanted one really. I certainly didn't want any more and I was frightened of more because it wouldn't do the children any good.'

Christine saw her marriage as the cause of her problem. When she described the effect of her sterilization, she made it clear that her sexual relations with her husband were affected, above all, by her feelings towards him rather than the operation itself. 'It was the same before and after. Every time he came near me my skin used to crawl. In the hospital I wasn't depressed but whenever I was with him I was.'

'I left my husband the same year as I had the operation. So much happened. When I thought about leaving him I thought it would take two or three years. Getting sterilized didn't make me want to leave him. I already wanted to. But after the sterilization I had to go back to hospital for something else and going home to trouble every time, it just built up. It was just too much.'

'I was married again in March 1973. Now I'm really in love. We talked it over and the hospital agreed and I got the sterilization reversed in September. I want another baby - he wants one. He treats the four as his own though. Well, the kids want another too. The reversal operation took four and a half hours and it was successful. I could get pregnant any time now. If it doesn't happen then that's it. It's an experiment. My husband sees it that way too.'

#### Adah

Adah was another woman who could trace no effects of sterilization to herself directly and was generally very pleased with the operation. 'I felt it was significant, knowing I had control over my own body. I was already extending my autonomy. I've had no after effects except I've lost weight.' She was sterilized when she was 31, only four months ago. She is married and has two children. She had no great difficulties at her interviews with her doctor or at the teaching hospital. She thought she was reaping the benefits of other women's previous struggles to convince the authorities at that particular hospital that women had the right to decide for themselves. She had also spoken to women who had gone through the whole experience and so she was ready for possible stumbling blocks. She also felt she was viewed as a professional woman, so there was class bias in her favour, since a 29-year-old working class friend of hers had been told by the hospital she was too young.

#### Trish

I also talked to Trish who was only 24 years old when she was sterilized, and had no children, which is unusual. The operation was over a year ago. She had known for a

long time that she would never want any children, and the man she was living with (before they decided to marry) agreed. Together, they did not want children. She had first thought about sterilization when she was 20. In 1971 she was fed up with the Pill and spoke to her doctor about sterilization. A year later, in 1972, she asked her doctor directly. His reply was that she should go away and think about it. Another year later, in 1973, she returned with her husband and told the doctor, 'I have thought about it. I know I want it and I'll get it through you or someone else.' We then spent an hour going through all the reasons - selfish as well as noble. He was then convinced. I used the argument that no one makes women go through all that to have a child, although it is a terribly important decision. Anyone can go and have a baby.

'At the hospital interview the fact that I knew what I wanted - laparoscopy - seemed to count a lot. I wasn't treated as a silly little woman.' There was a short gap between receiving the permission and having the operation. The operation went very well and it all seemed very simple to Trish. For a week or so she was easily tired and felt a dull sort of pain at the incision. 'Now, physically, everything's better. I'm more relaxed now. All the little tensions have gone. I sleep better and my depressions are much better.'

On the question of fertility, she said, 'Lots of people feel they're hollow if they don't have kids or the possibility of having them. I don't have that feeling. I now feel in control. I feel whole. Sexually, I feel much better. I don't feel tied to my marriage any more in a negative sense. Society tends to see marriage in a way I don't. I was pressured into it because it's more convenient the way things are set up now. As time went on, I suspect, I resented being married. I'm not sure. But once married I knew the next thing I would have to fight would be the children issue.'

Trish commented, 'Counselling must be very thorough beforehand. Guilt feelings which might be very hidden could surface afterwards if you aren't thorough beforehand. It's a big decision - it becomes symbolic. I don't know how many of the things you associate with the decision are just using it as a convenient peg handle.'

### Conclusions

These brief glimpses at some women's experiences and feelings are varied and are from women of different backgrounds and ages. Two of the women are in the women's movement, the others are not. The way they each represent somewhat different circumstances and different reactions, illustrates the variety of experience women had had with the same or similar operation. Can we draw any conclusions?

Sterilization must be the voluntary choice of a woman who, as far as is possible, has explored the many levels of her decision and is sure in herself that she really wants it. For example, Trish has said, 'I thought that all women would one day have a baby. I was about 16 when I realised that this wasn't true.' She was remembering the deepseated assumption that *women are here to have babies*. A biological possibility shapes their lives and attitudes in a way that we cannot underestimate, although I

am not suggesting that our psyches will be plugged into this destiny for ever.

Think of women worn out by child-bearing. Think of the many mothers of young children suffering from varying degrees of mental distress. Too often these problems are seen as 'not being able to cope', instead of problems of the role itself. Having babies is not, in itself, a negative thing, but when babies are the female *raison d'être* problems arise.

A discussion on sterilization throws you right into the midst of more general political questions. Sterilization is about our bodies, about women's control over their own reproductive functions, and this is a political question. It is linked to problems of health care in general. The male (and female) medical establishment remains very impatient with feelings and symptoms which don't fit in with the books they study. The conditions under which they work don't encourage really going into these problems, which are so important if they happen to you.

If women are left saying, 'It sounds good but it isn't me, it isn't what happened to me', after reading these experiences, then it means a lot more work has to be done. I would tentatively suggest that women who have the support and experience of the women's movement have the 'best' chance of working through their thoughts before and after sterilization. Talking together about what being a woman means in our society means we can come out of isolation and towards a common solution. Particularly in the last year, more and more women have joined women's health groups and begun to wage campaigns around existing health facilities. If women like Margaret participated in this sort of group, it would give her more of a chance to figure out what has happened to her and what may be done about it.

So I would suggest that any reactions to this article, disagreements and more information should be put towards our collective gain. If anyone wants to send me information, experiences, source material, etc., I will pass it on to AWARE (Women's Information Service) at South London Women's Centre, 14 Radnor Terrace, London SW8. Then information about sterilization would be centred in one place and could be used by any interested women. Please write to Sue O'Sullivan, care of *Spare Rib*, 9 Newburgh Street, London W1A 4XS■

#### Books referred to above:

- 1 and 3. *Vasectomy and Sterilization: A Guide for Men and Women* by Clive Wood. Pub: Temple Smith, London.
2. *Our Bodies Ourselves, A Book by and for Women* by the Boston Women's Health Book Collective. Pub: Simon & Schuster, New York.

#### Further reading:

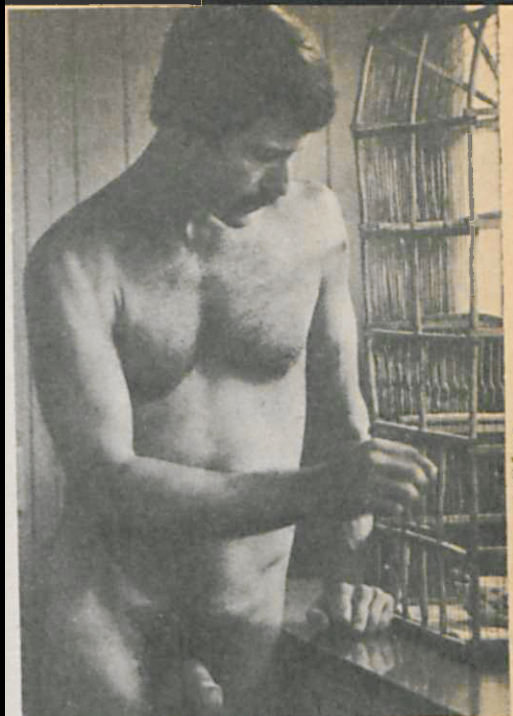
- Radical America*, Vol.8, No.4 (July-August 1973) 'Birth Control and Eugenics' by Linda Gordon.  
*The New England Journal of Medicine*, 8 February 1973, 'Alleged Psychogenic Disorders in Women - A Possible Manifestation of Sexual Prejudice' by Lennane and Lennane.  
*The Lancet*, 25 August 1973, 'Depression After Hysterectomy' by D.H. Richards.







ct.  
l  
ly  
  
s,  
he  
ge.  
y  
t  
  
o  
o  
e  
ng  
  
ak,  
t  
  
ly  
e  
.  
  
s  
  
e  
t  
  
r,  
a  
  
t



Playgirl

*We're assured even the toughest man is also sensitive, creative, deep. They may seem unattainable but they have a domestic streak, and might just settle down — with the right girl.*



Playgirl

*The poses pose problems. By the law the penis must never be shown erect. So the photos are littered with predictable phallic props.*



*The men don't go in for come-hither looks... They are shown absorbed in their own activities or thoughts or bodies. The message is, don't call us, we'll call you.*



*On the one hand, the models are presented as thoroughly male. On the other, they're photographed and packaged, put on display as passive pegs for other people's fantasies.*





Photo Mike Zimmerman

## Doors are opening in my mind

*This is another in our series, following the request in Spare Rib No. 28 for readers to interview themselves.*

I am one of the older generation (though I call myself middle-aged), nourished in my youth on Hollywood movies of the thirties and forties. The whole idea was that once *Mr Right* had come along, all worries and cares were over. I thought I had sufficient perception to see through this myth but nevertheless I found myself joining in the free-for-all to grab your man. I believe there were fewer men around at that time: consequently every other female became a potential enemy. 'All's fair in love and war' the saying goes and we played all kinds of games to outwit the enemy and corner our quarry. These games were often played at the local hotel ballroom on Saturday night.

That such a thing as discrimination between the sexes existed would have seemed totally irrelevant to me at that time. I was wrapped up in the lovely dream.

Like other girls who commenced work at sixteen plus, I tended to regard my clerical job in insurance as a stop-gap before marriage. Brainy girls, not interested in boys, were despised.

My mother said a gentleman was a man who walked on the outside when accompanying a lady, and raised his hat in greeting. My office had a fair sprinkling of gentlemen. Some of them would be called male chauvinists, nowadays. Several had regular girl friends in the office, as well as wives. When I was in the office I looked down on the wives for most likely *letting themselves go* (women's magazine aunts were constantly warning wives of this cardinal sin) and I joined in the general flirting that brightened the dull office day.

When eventually I joined the ranks of wives and mothers and experienced the frustrations of home-making I saw the other side of the picture. I felt anger toward men who lingered in city pubs drinking with their girlfriends, unable to face the tired little woman waiting in the suburbs. Yes, — no doubt the wives nagged (another cardinal sin) but maybe they had good reason. Most of the men sat on their

backsides all day: the female staff did the running around.

One of the senior men remarked that we girls were not paid to think. He was paid twice the salary of the head girl in the department. And she was twice as bright as he had ever been. But we were content.

Well — I married. Rather late in life but early enough to produce two children. Then I came face to face with reality at last. Motherhood did not, as I had fondly imagined, come naturally. The well-worn phrase 'enjoy your children' was foreign to me as I felt bogged down with anxiety most of the time. I missed the stimulation of being with my office colleagues. And, strangely enough, I missed solitude. As an only child (spoiled?) I had enjoyed moments of solitude, and now these were very rare indeed. That is not to say that I did not experience times of loneliness: a very different thing altogether. My husband is a mature person, which was very fortunate when things got the better of me.

I thought of myself as being very peculiar because I could not fit myself into the pattern. Every week I took in one of the cosy women's magazines and read the hints and recipes hoping that something would rub off. Of course, it did not.

Somehow I got through the essentials such as shopping and meals but I found keeping our flat tidy an impossible task. I would get so behind with the ironing that pillow-cases in the bottom of my ironing bag gathered mildew. Surely I was the only housewife to be hanging out nappies in the moonlight? The worst part was that neighbours and friends seemed to cope on their heads. Their secret was organisation I think; something else that was foreign to me. I envied them their well controlled children and polished sitting rooms and noted how the nappies were hung out like clockwork, first thing in the morning, and were quickly gathered in at the first sign of rain. Sometimes I had washing on the line for days: the same washing. And my babies

nappies were certainly the greyest. The domestic chit-chat over the fence and in the High Street bored and exasperated as I always had this terrific feeling of inadequacy. To console myself, I would tell myself that our untidy flat was more beneficial to children than the discipline of more orderly homes. Maybe I had something there because I do not think the children have come to any harm.

Gradually, I began to realise that I might not be as alone as I thought. I read about *Spare Rib* in a Sunday newspaper and went to some trouble to get a copy. One high street newsagent said he did not stock it because it was controversial: in spite of the fact that the place was plastered with girlie mags. Well, I've been taking it ever since. Here in print were expressed views that had been floating around in my head for years.

I read all the feminist literature I could get hold of: beginning with Germaine Greer, then on to Juliet Mitchell, Betty Friedan, Kate Millett, etc. This renewed my interest in life. There are so many books I want to read: the main problem is time. But, more importantly, I am on a voyage of self discovery and even making some attempts at writing.

One hears talk of consciousness raising, in connection with women's liberation. I have never been to a group meeting, but I believe I am at last beginning to know myself as a person, and what I want to do.

I shall not do anything dramatic like deserting the family but I do see now that there are both for and againsts when it comes to the question of marriage and I respect the viewpoint of those who decide it is not for them.

This winter I have joined a small group studying 'Women and Society' and we are looking at more literature, including Mary Wollstonecraft and Virginia Woolf. A few doors are opening in my mind ■

by Emmy Smith



# NEWS

## TURKISH CLOTHING WORKERS

## THE STRIKE AT SAADET FASHIONS IN HACKNEY

About 10 of the 70 men and women employed at the Saadet Fashions factory in Hackney, East London, began standing in the cold on the picket line on January 21st. They went there every day at 7 in the morning and stayed until the last of the 20-30 people still working in the factory left to go home late at night.

The strike started when four workers were sacked. One of the three women sacked had been with the firm for 10 years. The factory's one shop steward, who is a man, was also dismissed. The four of them were sacked after the women had stood firm on the demands that were being put forward.

Some of the demands made of the employers reflect the policy of the National Union of Tailors and Garment Workers (NUTGW), to which 65 - 70% of the clothing

workers at the Saadet factory belong. They demand 17 days paid holiday for the piece workers (not including bank holidays) and equal pay for the time workers, who do get holiday pay, but who don't get equal pay for equal time spent in the factory. The other demands arise directly out of the delicate situation in the Saadet factory.

Most of the people employed at the Saadet factory are Turkish immigrants. When they were first employed by the Cypriot owners of Saadet Fashions, they were instructed that it was not necessary for them to pay tax because it would be paid for them. The week before the strike, the workers were told that they would now have to start paying tax on the original wage that was agreed. This amounts to quite a considerable wage cut. The men and women at Saadet Fashions refused to accept a wage cut and made a demand for a wage increase of £5 a week for the weekly workers (time workers) and 20p and 40p for the two styles of ladies' coats which are produced in the factory (piece work).

The strike was very lively and well supported. Members of the Union of Turkish Progressives (UTP) and the Turkish Womens Association (TWA) were on the picket line supporting them. Union officials from the NUTGW visited the factory to talk over the situation. Clothing workers from other North London factories travelled to the factory to show their solidarity. On 24th January about 250 workers demonstrated outside in the cold.

People show their support in their own way. Dustmen asked the strikers whether they should collect the refuse or not, and left the employer with full bins; a sympathetic manager next door offered the strikers toilet and other facilities. This was turned down by the police, who stood at the door of the factory and disrupted conversations with the request to move on whenever four or five people gathered to talk to each other. Two pickets were arrested on January 21st and charged with obstruction, for which they both received £10 fines two days later at Old St. Magistrates court.

Most of the workers who came to support the strike at Saadet Fashions were Turkish workers employed at the 14 other clothing factories owned by Turkish Cypriots in the North East London area. On the 18th January, the UTP called a meeting which was attended by 200 workers from these factories. They discussed what they should do in the light of their employers recently forming an informal employers association. They also discussed what tactics they could use at the imminent strike at Saadet Fashions.

The owners of the 15 clothing factories got together for two reasons. Firstly, as many of the people on the picket line declared, they were 'frightened'. They knew that the UTP was a reference point within the Turkish community and that they had fought employment issues successfully before. They knew that their workers were able to take action as there had already been a strike in one of their factories. Secondly they wanted to sort out their tax problems making sure that the workers paid the costs. The tax problem has to be sorted out before





more formal organisation for the solution of employer-employee disputes can be set up.

In large factories in Britain, the typical pattern is for the employers to belong to one of the sections of the Employers Federation, and the workers to belong to one of the unions. Between the two, they finally agree upon procedures for collective bargaining. In smaller factories, where the structure is liable to be less extensive and more informal, the workers have to maintain a high degree of militancy to further their position.

The NUTGW have been attempting to get the employers to join the small outworkers section of the Employers Federation, whilst bringing Turkish workers into the union, so that more formal collective bargaining procedures can be instituted. However, the Turkish workers, although belonging to the NUTGW, relate primarily to the UTP, and the Cypriot employers meet among themselves.

The NUTGW is valuable to the more militant UTP because they hold the key to more concrete organisation, and also to strike pay. The UTP is invaluable to the NUTGW because it is only through them that Turkish workers who don't speak English can be reached, and it is the UTP which Turkish people trust.

For example, Turkish workers can gain strength from the success of fellow Turks in the London Wimpey Bars. In 1973 Wimpey Bar employees were paid 20p an hour. After a successful strike organised together with the UTP, these same employees were earning 60p an hour for the same work. They had also brought the international branch of the Transport and General Workers Union into the Wimpey Bars of Ali Salih, Turkish Cypriot owner of a large number of Wimpeys.

In the strike at Saadet Fashions, it is the work of the UTP and the TWA within the Turkish community which has generated the support for the strike. Both the UTP and the TWA have spent a great deal of time working around housing issues, and have also concentrated on language difficulties. The women in the TWA teach English to Turkish women, translate pamphlets (their most recent one being a pamphlet on pregnancy), and serve as interpreters in situations where English is essential. Roughly 15 of the 40 members of the TWA meet every fortnight where they discuss every aspect of their lives: their work at the clothing factories, their children, their exhaustion, their husbands, their sexuality. These discussions bring the world sharply into focus, and bring about a confidence which makes a militant position possible. ■

**Cathy Haw**

*Footnote:*  
The strikers' demands were met at the end of January.

## Every school should have a crossing

**More than 50 people picketed outside Highbury Quadrant Infants School in Highbury New Park, North London, every day for a week at the end of January. They were demanding a zebra crossing and a lollipop person after an old man was killed walking across the street and a 5 year old boy was knocked down outside the school and fractured his skull.**

"Every school should have a crossing, so that the kids can be given priority over traffic", said Lynne Segal, who became concerned about the potential danger outside the school about 6 months after her son started going there.

She wrote a letter to Islington Road Safety, a Council department - to which there was no acknowledgement, let alone a response to the request for a crossing - and circulated a petition, which was signed by 100 people. "There was scepticism, though", she said. "The school had been trying for 20 years to get a crossing. People said no-one would listen because Highbury New Park is what's called a 'ratrun' - a shortcut on which cars drive very fast to avoid major roads."

"Then two weeks later, in November, my son Zim was knocked down. He tripped over a parked car - which oughtn't to have been there in the first place - and fractured his skull. Then the mothers got incredibly angry. The Road Safety people told me they'd lost my petition, and we got another one together."

After Islington Road Safety suggested the group find a lollipop woman, the mothers wrote to Scotland Yard, which is responsible for lollipop people - and for paying them at about 50p per hour.

**"We waited until January, then got a letter from Scotland Yard saying we couldn't have a lollipop person 'because only one child has been knocked down recently, and that was due to the child's own negligence'. That was their exact phrase. The parents and teachers were particularly angry at the contemptuous tone of the letter. We called a meeting in the school and decided to go on causing trouble."**

"At the meeting we found out that an old man had been killed on the same street a few months ago. We lobbied the Council and the local police, and County Hall as well. We also decided to picket outside the school, twice a day, blocking off the traffic."

"There were about 50 or 60 people every day even though it was raining all the time. There was also solidari-

ty from the teachers: the Head and the Assistant Head were out there with us - a child from the Head's old school was knocked down and killed just before all this happened."

"The response to the picket was very sympathetic. People have written to the school, supporting the campaign. There was only one man who created a scene - that was a driver on his own. And the parents and teachers made a lot of contact. We all really enjoyed it - one mother said: 'I'm really going to miss it next week'."

"All the children of the picketers, including the under-fives in the school, were minded by teachers while the picket was on. It showed the way in which schools could, but rarely do, function as a real community centre."

"There were, inevitably, one or two women who said, 'Well, my children will never be knocked down because I pick them up'. Usually they were the mums with cars, who weren't working."

The action committee went on London Broadcasting and rang up Scotland Yard throughout the week, who said that the request for a lollipop person would be reconsidered at the beginning of February. If they are unresponsive, one member of the committee suggested, then the group could block off Highbury Corner, a busy roundabout half a mile away from the school.

The crossing campaign has exposed the irrationality of individual mothers picking up their individual children day after day. "A lot of the kids live just over the road", Lynne said, "and for many of them that's the only major road they have to cross. The mums felt that many women have to work and they just can't arrange their work around their kids' schooling. Also they felt it makes much more sense for one person to see all the children safely across the road, rather than depend on every mother - because it usually does come down to mothers - to drop what she's doing and pick them up. In fact, despite the idea that housewives are lazing around at home, the mums are probably housebound with their younger kids."

The group hopes that other schools will follow their example. "When we wrote to ILEA", Lynne emphasised, "it was to say that every school should have a crossing." ■

**Ann Scott**

## MEN AGAINST SEXISM National Conference Brighton March 21-23

University of Sussex - loose structure, centred on workshops. Creche and sleeping facilities available.

Info and registration from Conference Office, 151 Hollingdean Terrace, Brighton. Cost £1. Suggestions and working papers welcome.

## WOMEN WORKERS IN THE MEDIA: 'No more charities and baby shows'

**"Several years of campaigning by the women's movement have had little impact on the habits of journalists or on the way women are represented in the media", begins the draft Non-Sexist Code of Practice submitted to a recent conference of women workers in the communications industry. Here Marilyn Archer, a reporter on a Northern evening paper, looks at the Code and at the discussion which took place at the conference.**

"Redhead took on honey blonde yesterday". A typical, snappy *Daily Mirror* headline. It looks like a sexist report about two female wrestlers. In fact, it's a sexist report about two female politicians, Barbara Castle and Margaret Thatcher.

It is obvious to the women who work on Fleet Street and on provincial papers that this kind of misrepresentation is being churned out daily into British homes. So, for the first time, media women have made a move to get sexism out of the British press and entertainment industry, and to ensure a more realistic reflection of women's lives and capabilities.

At a conference held in London on January 18th 300 people, the majority women, with a handful of men, adopted the principle of a Code of Practice to do just this. "The communications industry is as influential in creating roles as it is in reflecting them and therefore media workers have a responsibility to ensure that women and women's activities are represented fairly," the Code states.

The lead has come from National Union of Journalists members at *Time Out* in London. They are ready to "black" any copy or photographs and refuse advertising material if it is "derogatory or insulting" to women or "gratuitously displays women's bodies".



A working draft of a Non-Sexist Code of Practice which was discussed at the conference covered these main points, but there were criticisms of certain pedantic commandments about the use of language. Would demanding the use of synthetic and railworker rather than manmade and railman really have much effect on attitudes to women?

But the general points about the media's stereotyping and exploitation of women were well received. Women are not just wives, mothers, consumers and sexual beings. 67% of women work outside the home, so the description "housewife" is not an accurate one in most cases. "It should be recognised that women lead multi-faceted lives", the Code continues. "The media under-represent women as: workers, creative and decisive social beings, providers as well as dependants, members of victimised social groups (eg oppressed races, homosexuals, religious minorities)."

The media is predominantly staffed by men and so reflects the values of a male-dominated society. In its conclusion, the Code ties together the misrepresentation of women through the media and the under-representation of women as workers in the media, and sees a remedy in greater integration of women in all areas of media work, "in order that a more balanced reflection of the composition of society can be achieved".

It will be a long march from *Time Out* to the institutional ranks of British newspapers and television, but the Code is being taken from the conference to media union branches further afield.

Members of the NUJ, ACTT, ASTMS, ABS, NATTKE, NATSOPA, SLADE, Equity and the Musicians' Union\* attended the one-day conference, which grew out of discussions by members of the London Freelance Branch of the NUJ. Finance came from the Rowntree Trust, but although some union branches sent contributions, none of their National Executives gave financial assistance.

Having established equal pay, the media unions seem to think there is little else to be done for women in the industry. In the workshops, the basic assumption was to the contrary. Women looked at the problems of maternity leave, pension schemes, recruitment and promotion, trade union membership and office holding.

One woman told the Newspaper and Magazine workshop that the London Clerical Branch of Natsopa had just dropped maternity leave from its latest claim. "Maternity leave is just a form of sick leave", she said, "and it shouldn't be subject to these haggles".

This workshop gave women the opportunity to provide straightforward descriptions and comparisons of their conditions of work. A



Illustration Christine Roche

woman from Glasgow: "I work for a tit and bum mag. I don't want to - but in a contracting industry you've got to take what comes."

A woman from Leeds, discussing sexism in the office: "When the New Year came in, the question of calendars arose. I think we have to be brave and raise this sort of thing."

Another reporter, describing her paper's policy on referring to women by their marital status: "I'm hauled back by the subs if I refer to a woman councillor as Councillor So-and-So. I put Ms or nothing; the sub just goes to another reporter to find out if she's Miss or Mrs."

A fourth reporter, on the pecking order for journalists: "The men get the hard news stories. The women get the charities and baby shows. They think that if I go to a crash I'm going to throw up and embarrass the paper."

There was disagreement about the need for cross-union women's caucuses, however: "What we have to do is educational. We must do it with the men. We're only half the population", said an NUJ Freelance member. Her opposition was echoed by a woman from SOGAT, who said that the women's branch of SOGAT was the lowest paid and "most poorly looked after" section of the union.

In support of the resolution calling for women's caucuses it was said that "We don't face the problem so much with women journalists, who are probably more confident than women cleaners, or factory workers. But there is a crisis of confidence. We need women's caucuses in order to organise to fight with the men."

A Musicians' Union speaker told

the Entertainments workshop that women were having such a tough time getting jobs in industry that applicants ought to play behind screens at auditions to sidetrack sex prejudice. And after some time working in a theatre workshop for £4 less than the men, another woman started to press for equal pay and was told she couldn't have it because she was weaker than the men and not as capable at the job.

The BBC's "old boys network" was criticised and a speaker reported that there was a definite division of labour between the women, who are largely confined to clerical jobs, and the men, who dominate the technical fields.

The Publishing workshop, attended by 50 NUJ, ASTMS and SOGAT members, focussed on similar problems. "Publishing is still seen as a gentleman's profession, demanding only gratitude and loyalty. We need to see it as an industry. We need an imaginative approach to interesting women in the union."

The sharp divisions between the media unions, so craft and status-proud, seems to work against the advancement of women in the industry. The conference looked at the difficulty secretaries have in becoming a journalist proper. Many secretaries function in fact as journalists, but the obstacles laid across the path of entering the NUJ from another newspaper union such as Natsopa keep them in the lower paid positions. "Ten years ago, when trade unions were less strong, it was quite common for a secretary to move up", said an NUJ speaker

from the *Observer*. "Now this can't be done", she added.

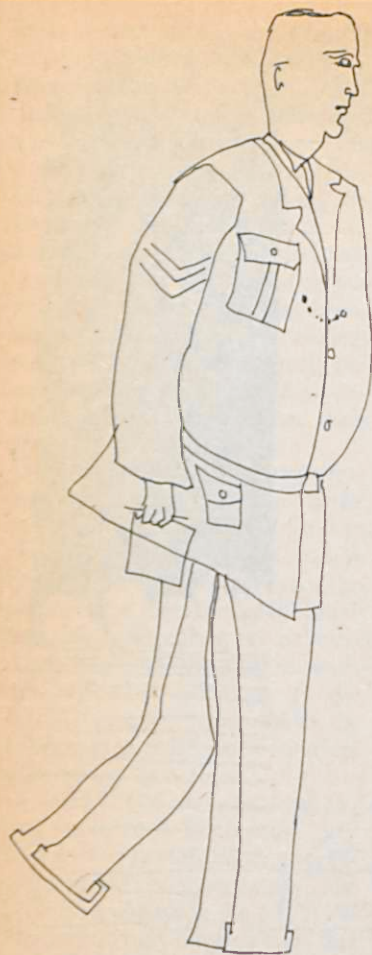
The call for women in the work place to meet and discuss their positions regardless of union-erected barriers illustrates the radical departure of media women from the traditional structures and priorities of the industry. For example, the male craft pride of the print unions is very much at the root of recent Fleet Street disputes which have aggravated the problems of the daily papers and, ironically, put their own jobs in jeopardy.

So in joining together to improve their own lot the women might break down harmful hostility between the unions and hasten their adjustment to an industry where craft is rapidly being overtaken by technology■

\*National Union of Journalists; Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs; Association of Broadcasting Staffs; National Association of Theatrical Television and Kine Employees (described by one speaker as "a dustbin for all workers who can't fit into any other category"); National Society of Operative Printers and Assistants; Society of Lithographic Artists, Designers and Engravers.

The national organisation for battered wives is now based at 430 Caledonian Road, London N7, so all donations should be sent there. Cheques should be made payable to National Women's Aid.





# ANEMONES AND CHAMPAGNE: ST. JOHNS WOOD WOMEN'S TRIAL ENDS

*Bunches of anemones thrown to the defendants from the public gallery and bottles of champagne accompanied the last day of the St Johns Wood Women's trial, which ended almost a year after it began. The eight women, who went on trial in February 1974 on charges arising out of an incident at a pub in North London, were fined a total of £195 at Marylebone Magistrates Court on January 22, Day 12 of the evidence. They were also ordered by Magistrate Rupert Rawden-Smith to pay £105 towards the prosecution costs.*

The original incident took place on a Sunday lunchtime last January. The women were refused a second round of drinks before closing time without explanation. The publican called the police and the women were variously charged at St Johns Wood police station several hours later.

The two women convicted of assaulting the publican and a police sergeant respectively were each fined £35. There were seven convictions for obstructing a policeman in the execution of his duty, each carrying a £15 fine; and one for threatening behaviour, carrying a £10 fine.

Giving evidence in her own defence on January 14, Jackie Finkle, one of the two who represented themselves, had referred to the politics of the situation at the New Inn public house when the women were not served and the police subsequently called.

"A group of women, clearly without any men, very often encounter this type of hostility, pubs being, by tradition, male domains. Even with the Anti-Discrimination Bill there are still all-male bars in public houses."

"Most of the women there, including myself, were discussing for some time how best to deal with the situation in which we found ourselves. We felt it would be a good idea to call the press at this point."

"My state of anger led me to seek out my rights - such as contacting the NCCL, which I did. My anger did not necessarily lead me to lurch out physically."

Ms Finkle had been interrupted at this point by the Clerk of the Court: "The NCCL's statistics can't have any bearing on whether you obstructed Sergeant Lawrence. That's what makes this evidence inadmissible."

## The Last Hearing

Cross-examined by David Pitman, prosecuting, on January 22, Faith McDevitt, representing herself, was asked why she had sat down inside the pub. "To show that I didn't have any aggressive intentions. I was trying to give an impression of passiveness, of fear, to avoid getting involved in the fracas outside. I'm trying to project what the police might have thought had I not sat down."

"But you were refusing to leave, by sitting on the floor?"

"That's untrue." McDevitt said she had never been asked to leave.

"Was sitting on the floor your way of coming back on the publican?"

"No. I agree with Jackie Finkle that making a situation public is the best way of dealing with it."

Turning to the "incident of the stool and the table", which the women were alleged to have thrown, causing the landlord's finger to be broken, Pitman asked McDevitt to draw a rough plan of the pub. Asked how she had indicated herself,

McDevitt replied: "Well, Su and I are the two dots. I'm the larger one - to show I'm sitting down." This remark gave rise to grins and laughter among the twenty women supporters in the public gallery.

Pitman commented that both Goretti Sheehan, the barmaid, and Mr Thomas, the landlord, "say that the table was thrown by one of the women in your group." "Yes, but in testimony", McDevitt replied, "they couldn't identify even one of the women who was in the courtroom, so that makes their testimony rather dicey."

McDevitt also denied having said: "This is a protest against discrimination against women", and denied using the term 'fascist pig' that Sunday.

"Would you ever conceive of yourself thinking of the words 'fascist pig'?", Pitman continued.

"How do I know if the words would come to my mind if they didn't?" McDevitt replied. Both the Clerk and the Magistrate said this question couldn't really be asked.

women. I gather you've not been there."

"Well, I've been in El Vino's". More laughs.

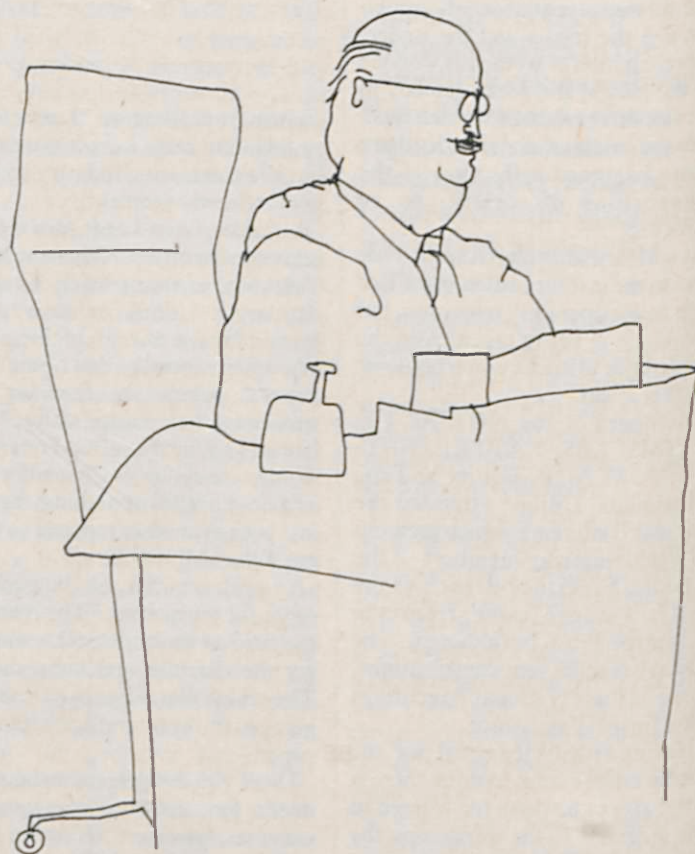
McDevitt called as witness Suha Zeki, one of the group of women in the pub, who testified that "as soon as the reporter entered, the situation changed dramatically. The police for some reason were provoked by his appearance. He was manhandled and thrown out - the police said his press card wasn't a press card."

Faith McDevitt, cross examining, asked whether the reporter was a friend of hers. "When he came in you didn't start screaming, 'He's my friend?'"

"Oh, no."

"Well, it may sound ludicrous, but it's been testified."

On the question of the flying furniture, Ms Zeki said: "A table came from behind me and came whizzing past and landed on the bar in a precarious position. The barman, who was behind the bar, saw my hand on it, came round and said 'You did that, didn't you.' I protested."



Magistrate: Rupert Rawden-Smith

**When asked by the Magistrate if there was anything else she wanted to deal with, McDevitt said: "I would like to bring to the court's notice that because I've been a woman all my life, this isn't a unique situation. It happens to women all the time, it happens in El Vino's in Fleet Street."**

The Magistrate interrupted her with: "You can't start dealing with other particular incidents. But I understand that what you're saying is that there's discrimination against

David Pitman, cross examining, asked how Goretti Sheehan responded when told off for serving Ms Zeki a drink: "Was she deeply apologetic or was she a bit insolent?" He continued by asking whether Miss Zeki knew why Miss McDevitt was sitting on the floor.

"I'm not in the habit of wondering why people are sitting or standing."

"But sitting is a way of protesting."

"I'm not familiar with it."

"Not familiar with the word protest?"

"I didn't say that."



## Final Submissions

In her final submission to the Magistrate Jenny Styring, solicitor for three of the defendants, suggested that in order for the prosecution to show conspiracy to trespass inside the pub, they would have to prove that the officers were acting in execution of their duty. She quoted the case of *Regina vs Prebble and Others*, 1858, in which the judge ruled that the defendants had a perfect right to be on the premises. Ms Styring reiterated Sgt Lawrence's own evidence: "If they were not consuming alcohol on the premises, then they were not committing an offence."



Defence Counsel: Jenny Styring

She pointed to the divergence in the prosecution and defence case over the sequence outside the pub. "The prosecution say that none of the ejected were held on to. Lawrence says he was kicked by Maureen Larkin, so he arrested her. The defence say that Larkin, trying to leave the pub, was seized by Lawrence."

"If Maureen Larkin's arrest is unlawful, ie if Lawrence's evidence is disbelieved, then almost all the other charges fall", she continued. "It's like a pack of cards. If you take out the bottom, then it all collapses." She asserted that the evidence on Larkin's evidence was strongly contradicted on several points, particularly by the police witnesses as to time sequence.

Ms Styring also suggested that her second client could not have been responsible for the alleged criminal damage to PC Hanna's coat, "given the strength of the material. Somehow she's supposed to have grasped that macintosh down to the second button, and been responsible for a horizontal tear without any of the buttons coming off." She quoted

Section 3 of the Criminal Law Act, 1967: "A person may use such force in the prevention of crime as is necessary to prevent an arrest which is unlawful."

**Beginning her submission to the Magistrate Nina Stanger, barrister for a further three of the defendants, questioned the bona fides of the police. "The police knew which side they were on. They used a euphemism that the women were drinking after time, and exceeded any reasonable conduct with regard to the eviction of those people."**

Commenting on events at the police station, where, the defendants alleged, the paper on which one of their addresses was written was screwed up because it was a squat, she said this was "evidence of temper on the part of the two policemen."

"One must also question the bona fides of a policeman who says 'You'll get a boot where it hurts' to a woman, in a police station." Remarking that "everything seemed to be quite reasonable until the arrival of the press reporter", she suggested that "perhaps the officers felt quite confident when dealing with women, but because he was a man, felt it necessary to eject him. It seems that the police *didn't* want an independent observer, and the whole thing started from there."

Exploring the obstruction charges Ms Stanger asserted that "if one sees an officer using excessive force - strangling or choking etc - then the person is entitled to intervene as a citizen, to touch that officer's arm to disengage him, and in that case that would not count as obstruction."

Continuing with an examination of Sgt Lawrence's testimony that he was kicked in the groin by Maureen Larkin, she reminded the court of the medical evidence that there was 'no sign of injury to the testicles'.

Submissions from the two women who represented themselves followed. Jackie Finkle contended that the three prosecution witnesses - the landlord; a company director who was a friend of the landlord; and the barmaid, who lived on the premises - demonstrated prejudice in their testimony, and "in no way stand separate from each other."

She said that Sgt Lawrence had told the court he had no recollection of her at all. "And I can't think of any reason why we were held at St Johns Wood police station for such a long time except to give the police time to construct a story", she added. She dismissed the prosecution case, which "seems to contend that we were seeking sensationalism and martyrdom. My contention is that a group of women were meeting for a quiet drink on a Sunday."

Speaking on her own charge, she said: "I was at no point told I was being arrested until I was taken into the charge room at about 6.20pm. Now I do know of cases where defendants have been acquitted merely

because they were not told they were under arrest."

In a short statement Faith McDervitt argued that "Mr Thomas and Ms Sheehan have contradicted themselves on every point. But they do agree that I was sitting or lying - as in lying down. Now, why wasn't there an arrest made on the scene, why was I given the leeway to jump on the sergeant's back?"

"I don't want to take up any more of the court's time, nor mine. What happened on January 13 was not a women's liberation demonstration, but an example of discrimination against women."

**The Magistrate, who then said the prosecution didn't need to make a statement, paused a moment before saying: "I find each of these charges proved."**

**When one of the defendants said she was "surprised that the Magistrate had given no explanation as to why you accepted the police story", Rawden-Smith said: "Is that all you wish to say? Very well then."**

## What Happens in Magistrates Courts?

In any court case the burden is on the prosecution to establish guilt beyond any reasonable doubt. In a criminal trial - where the jury is made up of ordinary citizens - the defendants are in a slightly stronger position than they would be in a magistrates court, for the majority of magistrates are concerned to accept the evidence of the police. In the words of a sympathetic barrister: "They have an idea that they must support the police force. The police know this and rely on it." It is the police who choose the charges, so the six St Johns Wood defendants charged with summary offences had no right to elect a trial by jury.

In fact the police are far more likely to bring charges which aren't indictable, ie cannot be tried by a jury. Two of the charges in the St Johns Wood case - actual bodily harm (to the landlord's finger) and criminal damage to property (the policeman's macintosh) - could have gone to a jury trial. However the two women



Prosecution: David Pitman



concerned waived their right to a jury trial. They wanted to be tried with all the others in order to emphasise the solidarity of the group.

The legal process in a magistrates court is arbitrary because it is individualised. Magistrates can get away with being bad-tempered, which usually means the defendants don't get a fair hearing. 'Good' magistrates - those who listen to both sides of the evidence - will be encouraged by supporters in the public gallery because they are aware of the social relevance of the case. 'Bad' ones will be shocked and disgruntled.

Most magistrates now accept that anyone who defends her or himself with the aid of a McKenzie (lay) adviser has as much right to a hearing as anyone defended by a lawyer, but the women who McKenzied in the St Johns Wood trial felt that difficulties were created for them.

At one point half way through the trial Jackie Finkle's McKenzie wasn't allowed into the cells once bail had been surrendered at 10am, although barrister Nina Stanger went with her. Jackie asked for an explanation when the hearing began, and was told that the court decides who is allowed into the cells. The clerk may have felt that relevant discussion should have taken place before bail was surrendered, and that the situation would be different if the women had been in custody. Even so, "McKenzies should have the same rights as barristers. Anyone defending herself is under especial pressure", the women said later.

A stipendiary magistrate like Rawden-Smith, who must have legal qualifications - seven years for a barrister or a solicitor - takes advice from the clerk, but doesn't have to give reasons for his decisions - presumably because they are about matters of 'fact'. In trials before lay magistrates, however - these are 'political appointments' of local notables who might or might not have a legal training - the clerk has more power, as she or he must be legally qualified. Most are solicitors. The clerk always decides about legal aid, though - and in the St Johns Wood case three of the defendants weren't granted it.

This case went on for a year, with about one day's evidence a month. The women could have asked the Lord Chancellor to set aside fourteen days for the case: if a case is expected to run for more than ten days it usually goes to a special court, like Wells Street or Lambeth in London. At the beginning of the trial they did in fact ask at Marylebone whether a whole week could have been set aside. Last summer, though, the court was still unrealistic about the probable duration of the case. "So far the prosecution case has taken 5½ days", the women said then, "and it's ludicrous to think the defence will take only one day."

So although the magistrate was not

obliged to give a reason for his guilty verdict, it was reasonable to expect one, given the length of the case and the consequent inconvenience to the defendants and their counsel. The magistrate in the Powis Square Fireworks case in 1971, for example, gave a long judgment on the extent to which the police had over-reacted. "If I'm walking down the street", he had said, "I expect the same rights to be accorded to me if I'm a magistrate or a person with long hair."

### The Importance of Self-Representation

"It's good to have a mixture of legal support and self-defence", said Jackie Finkle a couple of days after the trial ended. "It shows that women are able to defend themselves in court, and it serves to publicise the incident more."

"There is a positive aspect too in our learning how to cope with the State in all its forms - through the courts, Claimants Unions, and so on - and then being able to set up a chain. For example, Faith and I could now McKenzie in another trial."

"It also helps the defendants who are represented: barristers and solicitors just weren't there at the incident. So the others can have confidence that things will be said by the people who were."

"But it can be frustrating to be unable to say anything", said one of the other defendants. "I picked up on points where I could have defended myself, but my counsel didn't because she had other things to think about."

"You've got to make political points, but you've also got to think about winning the case, and on their terms," Jackie continued. "You have to operate with the notion that you're not going to get justice - but

that you're speaking in a public place."

**"You can plead legal naivete, in a sense. For example, take the note about the squatters. A note saying 'We've got a load of squatters here who won't move' was taken down by the police when the publican phoned the station. It was passed all along the front bench at the trial but was ruled as inadmissible evidence. I was then able to say: 'I know there are legal niceties against this, but I have just seen this note.' Women defending themselves can do this. We can say is this a legal game, or are we trying to figure out what actually happened."**

One of the main points of the trial for the defendants was the consistent presence of women's liberation supporters in the court. Jackie applied for a bigger court on the first day of the trial on the grounds that there wasn't room in the public gallery.

"The fact of there being so many women took away the intimidation of the courts - particularly the higher courts". (Last July the women took the *Daily Express* to the Appeals Court for allegedly biased reporting during the early hearings of the trial. Had the *Express* been found guilty of Contempt of Court, the editor would have been jailed).

"It would have been quite different for us if there had been no women in the gallery. It meant that men were definitely in a minority, and so were threatened. That was a point against us in terms of winning the case - Faith and I were seen as treading into their professional world because we were defending ourselves, in the same way as in the pub. In fact it would have been even more threatening if we'd been tried by a lay magistrate."

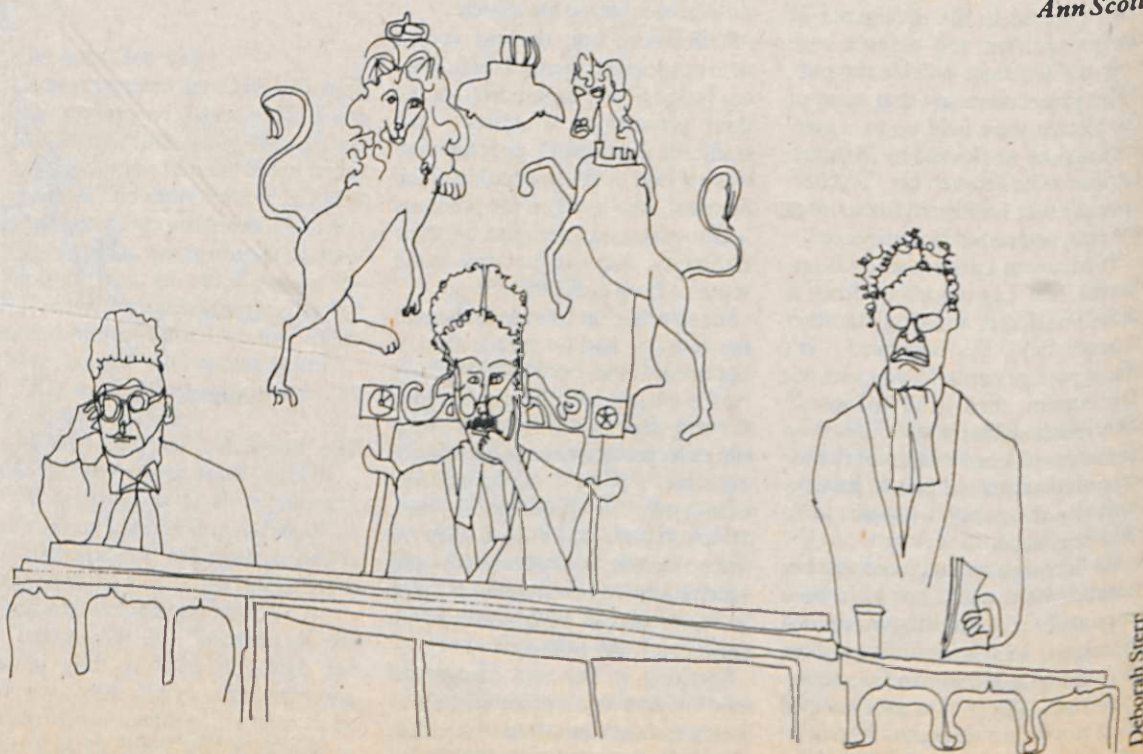
Discussion about the potential advantage of pleading not guilty and offering no defence went on at the beginning of the case, on the grounds that there is really no point taking complaints about sexist behaviour to men.

Although they work as a team, self-represented defendants and defence counsel don't have to be in agreement about tactics at every moment of the trial. "For example our application for Rawden-Smith to remove himself on grounds of prejudice since he had read the *Daily Express* write-up of the first hearing wasn't supported by the defence counsel," Jackie said.

In addition, representing yourself does enable you to make feminist connections. Pointing to the "blatant contradictions" in barmaid Goretti Sheehan's statement, Jackie commented: "The defence counsel, determined to win the case, gave Goretti a hard time. But we weren't prepared to exploit another woman, even at the expense of not winning the case. We were making a political point about women. Do you remember what Faith said to her? 'It's because we're both women, and victims of the same oppression, that we're both in this court today. I couldn't possibly ask you any more questions'."

The women have to pay the costs of the Contempt of Court application against the *Daily Express* - estimated at up to £1,000 - as well as the recent collection of fines. Thus contributions to the Women's Legal Aid Fund - a fund instituted during this trial but which will hopefully become an ongoing one to help women defend themselves in future cases - should be as large as possible, and should be made as soon as possible. Women's Legal Aid Fund, c/o 38 Earlham Street, London WC2.

Ann Scott



High Court, July 1974: Lord-Widgery dismissing the women's application against the *Daily Express*

Deborah Stern



# LEEDS WOMEN'S AID: SOCIAL SERVICES HAS 'OTHER PRIORITIES'

Leeds Social Services Department officials and committee members have found themselves in an embarrassing situation recently. The efforts of Leeds Women's Aid to secure an Urban Aid grant for the battered women's refuge they set up six months ago were received in an apparently off-hand manner by the Social Services Department, which had other priorities.

But with refuges in the neighbouring towns of Wakefield and Bradford being granted several thousand pounds from the Urban Aid fund, Leeds, the largest city in West Yorkshire, is now lagging behind with no official banner being carried for battered women, nationally recognised as a very needy group.

With the failure of their Urban Aid application, Leeds Women's Aid is hard pressed for the ready cash to meet the winter's electricity and phone bills. So a second attempt is being made to obtain local authority money and the group has applied for a Social Services grant.

"We are going to make them take us seriously," said a member of the group. "They might have thought we were being idealistic in the beginning, but we have been open a few months now and 50 women have come and gone."

The great irony is that the Social Services Department itself refers women to the refuge, a house provided by the council for which they pay a nominal rent and rates.

"They send most of the women to us themselves, but their latest complaint is overcrowding and they may demand we limit our numbers before a grant is made," said the spokeswoman.

The group has had difficulties with another official department - the Department of Health and Social Security. They had to appeal against the SS's system of awarding benefit to the women who use the refuge. Rather than assess accommodation costs on an individual basis, the Social Security was assessing them on a room basis, so there was no more money coming in in rent contributions when there were 15 women than when there were five, in spite of increased costs for lighting, heating, washing and cooking. "They don't work on the same kind of logic," said the spokeswoman.

But the refuge has proved very

successful. Apart from smashed windows and a threat of a petrol bomb from angry husbands, daily life runs fairly smoothly. The women have been pleasantly surprised by the response of local people to publicity in the local press and radio. And there has been no shortage of electric fires, cookers, beds and furniture, while odd cash contributions from individuals and organisations keep them going.

"Brownies, Young Wives Groups, schools have sent money and some groups have adopted us as their fund-raising project for this year. We have applied to some local trusts, like Montague Burton's and Collier's, so we will be able to manage this year without the Urban Aid grant, but next year will be a problem."

Throughout all the financial and practical problems, the women of Leeds Women's Aid still find time to keep an eye on the point of their efforts. At a regional conference of Women's Aid groups held in Leeds, they re-examined their aims and objectives and decided on a policy of providing accommodation on request. "If a woman comes to us with nowhere to go, we are not going to turn her away."

"We also want to underline our links with the Women's Movement. It would be so easy to go the way of other charities and just become dogooders."

## LOCAL RADIO TRIVIALISES WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

Spare a thought for Jill Liddington. Ms. Liddington is tutor for a new course of Women's Studies sponsored by Manchester Education Committee and the media have been after her for interviews.

First in line was BBC TV's *Look North* where she was interviewed by Michael Delahey. During the interview, Jill complained about the way the media trivialises the women's movement. When it was over the camera shifted back to a grinning Stuart Hall who commented: "Tee, hee. Michael burnt his bra last year."

Next came the local commercial radio station, Radio Piccadilly. They asked Jill in for an interview and she agreed after guarantees that the interview would be serious. So it was, but when she heard it at home, the interviewer, Stephen Beard, had added a couple of sentences. "After the interview I asked Jill Liddington if she wanted to abolish men. And the reply was a big raspberry."

"What annoys me most" said Jill, "is that I have been interviewed

about other things before, like books - certainly nothing involving sex - and nothing like this has happened. It's just because it's Women's Liberation. They cannot treat it seriously like any other subject for discussion."

Jill's anger was tempered to some extent when she took part in a Radio Piccadilly phone-in about women and work. The programme was balanced and useful. Perhaps the fact that the chair was held by a woman, Judith Weymont, had something to do with it.

## WOMEN IN NALGO: CRECHE FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT - MENT WORKERS

Camden Women in Nalگو - incorporating local government workers in housing, libraries, law centres and day care - was formed last September out of a national equal rights working party in the union. Women make up only 5% of senior officer grades in local government and 80% of lower clerical grades.

"I am very concerned with getting telephonists, clerical workers and more men to the meetings", said the convenor of the group, Angela Waller of Camden's Housing Aid Centre. "We only have about 20 people attending each meeting - but these are not the same people. This is because attendance is often on a 'rota' basis as Social Services staff and libraries staff, in particular, cannot always get away."

"I'm thinking, if we can get a stronger contingent together, of unilaterally declaring a meeting in



work time, and putting the (predominantly male) executive in the position where it has to either support us or oppose us. Meanwhile we will continue with our policy of trying to get the union more 'personalised' via a shop steward system, in order to make the executive less remote, and to encourage more women to stand."

18 members of the group - including two men - met in January and discussed proposals for a staff

creche, which are now going through the Social Services committee.

"We've had problems with staff unable to come back to work after having children", Angela said. "Women are prevented from twinning - that's a system where you work in pairs: one works in the morning, one in the afternoon. One woman was told that she would be re-employed part time if she resigned, which she did, and then it didn't happen."

"We're trying to get more information on the provision of creches in other London boroughs. We felt that at the moment it would be best to campaign for creches for local government workers, although ideally we'd like a creche for everybody."

At the beginning of October the group sent a questionnaire to the Director of Personnel at Central and Management Services, but there has been no response despite two reminders. The group asked for information on the ratio of men to women throughout the grade structure in Camden; women's average wages; how often women represent their department at meetings; whether there is any difference in maternity arrangements for married and unmarried women; and the extent to which women undertake 'extra' tasks 'in mixed situations, eg manning desks at lunchtime, taking notes, making tea, rather than men.'

"At the January meeting we also discussed the problems of taking leave for looking after sick children", Angela continued. "People have to take their holidays to do this - and it's usually women who do. We wondered whether Flexitime - a system of people choosing their working hours - would help."

One member of the group is researching into interview techniques. "We feel that any personal questions should be the same for both sexes. At the moment women are asked more overt questions, like 'Are you going steady?' We felt also that the single or married category should be removed - marital status can always be found out later if it's needed for National Insurance purposes."

The group also plans to protest about an ad which appeared in the January issue of the Camden Nalگو magazine *Public Eye*. Main attraction at a forthcoming 'hen night - an evening out for the ladies' was to be a male stripper. There is also strong feeling about the fact that men in Camden are not allowed to train as nursery nurses, and the group has been liaising with the Nursery Nurse Action Group which recently got together a petition of 2000 signatures demanding improvements in wages and working conditions.

Camden Women in Nalگو can be contacted through Angela Waller, Camden Housing Aid Centre (Research and Information), 01-

388 0331 x 32.



# OPENING UP OXFORD

Recently the university authorities in Oxford realised that the lack of suitable male applicants would force them to open a few doors to women. They passed the "Jesus Plan", and as a result five men's colleges have been admitting a handful of women each. Figures vary from 16 to 34 - approximately one-fifth of the first year intake. Here a group of women students describe their campaign for genuinely equal opportunity.

With Jesus, Hertford, Brasenose, Wadham and St. Caths taking this small quota, and five women's colleges already in existence, the percentage of women in Oxford will soar from a paltry 20% to a paltry 25%. The women are not being admitted on an equal basis; they're not even taking the same entrance examination as the men. The university sees even this as an "experiment", to be reviewed in 1977. Meanwhile they've placed a moratorium on the further admission of women, so the other colleges can safely ignore the issue.

Previous student campaigns, run largely by men, were concerned with co-residence rather than equal opportunities. They argued that more women in Oxford would make life less frustrating for men and raise academic standards.

We are not campaigning for more sex or more first class honours; we are fighting for equal opportunities for women, and it has become increasingly obvious that we can and must fight for ourselves, organise together and not let ourselves be organised by a few politically experienced people (usually men) for their own purposes.

We drafted the following demands:

- 1) An end to the moratorium on the admission of women.
- 2) An equal admissions policy, with women taking the same entrance exam.
- 3) An end to discrimination against women throughout education, and the inclusion of all sectors of education in the Government's Sex Discrimination Bill (at present single sex and predominantly single sex educational establishments are exempt).
- 4) Implementation by the university of affirmative action in the admission of women, recognising that discrimination exists at all levels in education; and immediate movement towards a situation where there are 50% (or more) women students and teachers in Oxford.

Our slogan, "Not content till 50 per cent", is far-reaching. We realise that if we were offered equal opportunities in education and employment tomorrow we wouldn't be able to take them up either without provisions to enable more women to enter higher education - nursery facilities, an end to discriminatory grants, etc. - or without an enormous change in attitudes. A 50% quota of places for women is suggested as a way of encouraging more women to stay on at school and apply for university. The most important point is that we are not prepared to accept the argument that Oxford need not provide more places for women because not enough women are going to take them up. Why are there only 35% women in higher education as a whole?

Instead of getting a couple of individuals to go off and write an account of the campaign last term, we decided to record a group discussion.

*Dena:* Some people feel obliged to try and get some order into meetings, and others are understandably indignant at this. There's a conflict between feeling individually responsible for specific tasks, and feeling that there should be collective responsibility, even if it's less efficient.

*Barbara:* Those who've been involved in the women's movement or other political activity longest do tend to assume leadership roles.

*Dena:* Perhaps people like me should hold back a bit more. But even so, new people have turned up and got involved straight away in producing leaflets, flyposting and everything.

*Elaine:* We've got two aims really: to achieve the actual demands of the campaign, and to raise women's political consciousness. There's an undefined tension: the consciousness question has been subordinated

to the demands for reform.

*Sue:* We've had no general discussion of our political consciousness. We hoped to win the demands by the usual campaigning methods, but I think what we need is a hard core of women to confront more general, long-term problems of women in education. Some people had set ideas about the campaign, but most people didn't know what they wanted, let alone how to get it.

*Reen:* Newcomers don't see it as clearly defined.

*Teresa:* I came for the first time last week, and found it very confusing. There's an undercurrent of assumption that the demands themselves are irrelevant.

*Dena:* The demands in themselves wouldn't mean much if we weren't trying to fight discrimination in the way we actually ran the campaign.

*Elaine:* We're all learning to speak, finding our voices.

*Sue:* I was experienced in Left groups, and always seemed confident, but only now do I feel fully confident.

*Jane:* The campaign fosters friendship among women. We see each other differently.

*Dena:* Perhaps it's harder to involve other women, though, if we're seen as a tight-knit bunch; people are so quick with the label 'elitist'.

*Sue:* But I don't feel our closeness cuts us off from other women. In fact, the variety of opinion within the group has helped me understand attitudes I come across elsewhere.

*Noor Jahan:* I've heard women say they haven't time to come to meetings but they do support us.

*Reen:* There's a strange idea of privilege in this university because of the high proportion of men to women. Women are reserved with each other in the colleges, and very competitive.

*Barbara:* They see each other as rivals.

*Elaine:* The campaign could easily become introverted. We have to

keep looking outwards.

*Jane:* A lot of women don't take it seriously.

*Alex:* Or they feel alienated by the absence of men in the campaign.

*Sue:* That's just their excuse. If they've been involved in campaigns before, they've got used to playing token roles. And anyway we can still have joint action even if we have separate meetings.

*Jane:* This question comes up so often, it gets boring.

*Dena:* Our only argument is our experience of how good women-only meetings can be.

*Reen:* I'm not interested in men who want to manoeuvre us. If they're genuinely sympathetic they understand why we have to meet separately.

*Sue:* They feel personally threatened by an active group of women.

The campaign last term consisted of open meetings once a fortnight, knocking on women's doors in colleges in order to discuss the quota, and generally 'making an issue' of it. On December 2nd we picketed the university decision-making body, the 'Hebdomadal Council'. Fifteen of us, with placards spelling *Women Join Us*, chained ourselves to the railings, others leafleted passers-by, one dressed up as a don. About 70 of us were there, having a really good time. A support picket of men over the road looked less at ease. Reporting was misleading of course: the *Oxford Times* had taken a photo of only three of the eleven women with letters - those with the letters MEN. But we did at least get a lot of publicity and attention.

This term the emphasis will be on getting more women involved, by talking in the colleges and so on. We'll also do some street-theatre, and in 'International Women's Week', around March 8th, there'll be a special women's issue of the student socialist paper, called, curiously enough, *Strumpet*. □



Oxford Women's Liberation



# YORKSHIRE: MATERNITY LEAVE

In Yorkshire, the Huddersfield Spenn Valley Chamber of Commerce has declared "unacceptable" the provisions for maternity benefit and leave in the Government's Employment Protection Bill. The Chamber's observations have been passed on to the Association of British Chambers of Commerce to be communicated to the Government.

Safeguarding women's jobs while they are off work to give birth is "a retrograde step", in the opinion of Mr. J. Heaton. It could result in further discrimination against women, in spite of efforts being made to bring about equal pay.

"When it comes to choosing a man or a woman for a job with equal pay, a firm, bearing this extra imposition in mind, would possibly discriminate against a woman," Mr. Heaton told the Chamber.

On the other side of the Pennines there's another effort to make sure women stay at home warming the old man's slippers. On the recommendation of 54-year old Labour councillor George Wilcock, the Housing Committee in Salford, Lancashire, is urging brewers to include men-only rooms in any new public houses they build. So much for the Labour Party's commitment to equality for women. □

## Manchester: next national conference

The growth of the women's movement is beginning to pose some practical problems for the groups which organise national conferences. The latest group to tackle a national conference is the Women's Liberation Group in Manchester, who are organising one in the city on April 5 and 6.

The attendance is expected to be 1500, and the Abram Moss Centre, where the conference is being held, will only be able to cope with a plenary session of 600. However, this newly opened community centre comprises a library, school, college of further education, social services and health facilities, and there are some good rooms available for workshops.

Even so, short of hiring the Free Trade Hall, or Belle Vue's Kings Hall, or insuring the University's Whitworth Hall, there is no hall in Manchester available to the organisers which could cope with many more than 600. This limitation is

forcing the Manchester group to look for new ways of organising the plenary sessions and they are concerned that women who attend should be aware of the problem.

The group wants it to be a good conference for kids as much as for the women themselves. There will be a creche, art rooms in the Abram Moss Centre will be opened for the kids, and the organisers hope to have outings to local parks and the zoo at Belle Vue. Men from *On the Eighth Day*, a health food restaurant and clothes shop, are providing the food.

Although men are barred from attending, the organisers warn that because the conference is being held in a community centre, members of the public will be using the same entrance, men among them. "There was some trouble about this at the Edinburgh conference, so we want to be sure people understand that although there will be no men at the actual conference, there will be men wandering about on the fringes," said a spokeswoman.

Registration for the conference is £2 before March 10 and £2.50 after, money to be sent to the Women's Centre, 218 Upper Brook Street, Manchester 13. There is to be a social with music by the Northern Women's Rock Band.

The organisers hope to compile a new national address list and they say help in doing so will be greatly appreciated. □

## What Happens in Special Education?

Dear Spare Rib,  
There are so many things wrong with the article 'What Happens in Special Education?' (Spare Rib 31) that I don't know where to begin.

1) Agreed it is a contradiction to try to teach someone who is sub-normal to be normal. It is also a contradiction to train somebody who is physically handicapped to lead a normal life. But just because somebody is in a wheelchair, it doesn't mean that they shouldn't be helped towards as 'normal' a life as somebody who can walk.

2) As regards the difference between social acceptability and social competence, in my experience most work with the severely subnormal is in the latter area. It is connected with teaching people to wash, dress, go shopping, make phone calls, and if possible to read and write. Anyway if one is bothered about teaching social acceptability, I feel there are spheres other than severe subnormality where actions should be questioned. It is not among this group that the revolution will be made - it is more important to teach them how to get along (not 'get on') in life than what is wrong with society. In order to turn against something one has to understand it in the first place.

3) I think the reasons women go in for teaching and the other 'caring' professions is wrongly analysed. Some women will do it as it seems the only option available. For many it is a positive decision not to enter the rat-race and aggression of business and other male-oriented areas. Liberation means choosing the job that one wants freely - and I think for a lot of women that would still involve working in teaching and especially in the sphere of special education. It certainly is for me.

I was upset to find an article in Spare Rib that seemed to be so far off the target. Luckily it is a rare occurrence.  
Best wishes  
Gill Bibby  
Tunbridge Wells

**Liz Cooper and Rob Henderson reply:**

Perhaps we didn't make it clear: the contradiction is *not* in teaching someone who is 'subnormal' to be normal, but rather it is in teaching normality while at the same time maintaining the category of subnormality by treating the person as subnormal. It is not a contradiction to 'train somebody who is physically handicapped to lead a normal life' if you are teaching a person, not a handicap. What chance does a 'sub-normal' child with an 'I.Q.' of 25 and a diagnosis of 'unspecified brain damage' have of breaking through that definition when it is constantly maintained by the way in which people treat him/her, even if he/she is being taught to wipe his/her bottom and say hello on the phone?

Our experience of research and teaching subnormal children shows that in the classroom, the playground, the ward, the emphasis is on good behaviour. We were told 'a badly behaved child is just another handicap'. The point of the distinction between social competence and social acceptability was to question what is involved in teaching 'shopping', 'washing', 'phoning'; may it not be more a reflection of the teacher's values than the child's needs? As for - no revolution is possible in the sphere of severe subnormality - why not?

We do not believe that people - and in this argument - women, choose freely. A decision to go into teaching rather than the rat race is not exercising choice in our view. As you say for some women, entering one of the 'caring' professions is the only option available. It is also true that some women who are wives and mothers claim that they are happy and that they choose to be where they are. The women's movement is not only critical of the lack of options open to women - we also reject "free choice" as a concept in that it is used by the oppressors to convince the oppressed that they are happy with their lot - and the oppressed believe it.

We wrote the article to open up a discussion; thank you for replying. □

# RAPE AND THE RIGHT TO PICKET

The arrest of six women for obstructing the highway when 40 women picketed in London in solidarity with California rape victim Inez Garcia last October has raised the political issue of the right to demonstrate outside the US Embassy.

"The police seem to have an informal agreement with the Embassy to erode the right to demonstrate", said Jane Hickman, one of the defendants, whose trial continues in March.

It was reported, for example, that when Walter Annenberg, US Ambassador in Britain, turned up half way through the demonstration, one of the policemen asked what he wanted done. "I leave it entirely in your capable hands, officer", was Annenberg's reply. The arrests took place shortly after this exchange.

Along with Jean Whitfield - who pleaded not guilty, represented herself, called no witnesses and was fined £20 - Jane Hickman pleaded not guilty at Wells Street magistrates court on January 13. Both she and Karen Scadeng intend calling "many witnesses."

The trials of Marcia Keller and Diana Russell have been postponed to August 1975 and 'sine die' respectively (legal language for postponement with no fixed date).

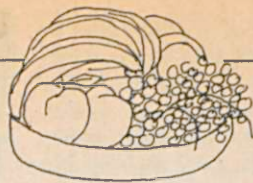
The six received a telegram of sympathy from the Inez Garcia Defence Committee in Monterey, California. The latest information on the Garcia case is that Inez is going to be re-sentenced.

Last October Inez Garcia, who is of Cuban and Puerto Rican descent, was convicted of second degree (unpremeditated) murder for shooting and killing one of her attackers after being beaten and raped in Soledad, California. She had been defended by San Francisco attorney Charles Garry, much revered defence counsel to the Black Panther Party at the end of the sixties.

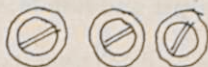
The demonstration in London coincided with the closure of several women's campuses in the States as part of an international solidarity action on the day of Inez' sentencing. □

The next hearing of the case, with Jane Hickman and Karen Scadeng's defence, is at Wells Street Magistrates Court, 10am, March 25.





# REACHING THOUSANDS OF WOMEN



**Bristol Women's Abortion and Contraception Campaign made their own half-hour programme to go out on Harlech Television last December. Here Betty Underwood describes the two months' work that went into the project, the group's tussles with HTV, and the response generated among women in the area.**

In the autumn of 1974 we were approached by Harlech Television to take part in a series called "Free Time" - a kind of Access/Open Door project. We were offered facilities to make our own half-hour programme to go out on a Friday night at 10.30 p.m. and were told we could decide totally what went into the programme.

Limitations were that it had to be filmed all on the same day, entirely in the studio, in the order in which it would be shown, and with little or no editing. While this last meant that they couldn't chop it around, it also meant that we couldn't afford to make any mistakes. We were offered the use of the film library, and the services of the Graphics Department. The Director was a man who some of us had met before, and he was anxious all the way through to impress upon us that we should feel that it was "our" programme.

We couldn't miss this opportunity of reaching thousands of women. Late Friday evening is a good viewing time and all the commercials at that time are directed at women. Before we agreed finally we heard that our programme was scheduled for about 8 weeks later, and that the anti-abortion Society for Protection of the Unborn Child would have a slot about a month before us.

With such a wide field to cover, we

decided right away that the basic theme must be "A Woman's Right to Choose". Some of us watched the early programmes made by other groups, and with one or two exceptions they just had people sitting in the studio talking. There was a lot of repetition and wasted time. So we started to work out different ways of getting our ideas over with visual material and changes of method to hold people's interest. (Speaking for myself, I started watching television in a completely new way.)

We realised that we couldn't do this in the same setting as the other groups. So far the only background we had seen in the other programmes was a black limbo in the middle of which people sat on upright chairs, with some pieces of scaffold-looking tube in the background. We felt very strongly that this alien setting would make us look isolated, out of touch with real life and not as if we were talking about something which was part of every woman's real experience.

We contacted HTV to ask if we could look at the studio where the filming would be done. They didn't see why we wanted to, but in the end some of us just arranged to go out there with the script, and then asked to look at the studio while it was empty in the lunch hour. We asked for some props, and backcloths, and for a set we saw in the studio which looked like the kind of thing used on "Women Only" programmes. We also asked for low, comfortable chairs for our discussion, a "newsreader's background" for other parts of our script, and a cooker and sink as props for the sketch with which we planned to open. They hummed and ha'ed and said it was difficult, and no-one else had asked for them.

We had a further meeting with the Director at our Women's Centre one evening (5 hours!) when we went right through the script with him, explaining it fully. He was very helpful about many things, espe-

cially when he understood more clearly what we were getting at. But still he raised difficulties about the sets and we were left feeling that we wouldn't get much of what we had asked for.

Five of us from the Bristol WACC group worked at full stretch for two months. We agreed *everything* that went into the script. We worked out the form of the programme, separately went away to write items, came back and tore each other's work to shreds. It was the hardest way to do it, but the most rewarding. I think we were able to do it and keep together because all of us cared more about our relationship to the women who would be watching than about our own egos.

Finally, on the day, we all turned up at the studio, carrying posters, bits of the backstreet abortion display, cannula, pregnancy testing kit, props for the sketch. Besides the 5 members of the Bristol Group, there was one sister from Cheltenham WACC, and two sisters from Sistershow who were helping with the sketch. We walked into the studio, and there it all was! The sets we had asked for, the low chairs, the cardboard cut-outs of a sink, cooker, vacuum cleaner which struck just the right note of parody for the sketch. All the difficulties, or nearly all, had disappeared: we did wonder whether they had to put up token resistance to show us who was boss? Did they know, I wonder, that we had made up our minds to go round and take what we wanted if we hadn't got what we had asked for?

But from the minute we got there everyone in the studio went out of their way to use their technical knowledge to help us put over what we wanted to say in the best way. The time we had spent with the Director was well worth while, and so was the time we had spent working on the script and rehearsing. We rehearsed for ourselves in the morning, for the technical side (cameras, lighting etc.) after lunch and finally started filming late in the afternoon.

When you take part in a television programme, you deal quite separately with the Contracts Department for the financial side. They can be pretty mean, and you have to keep on your toes. We asked for and - because we stood firm - got a group contract, but they tried to pay us less because of it. We checked with one of the other groups who made a programme, and refused to accept their first offer, but finally settled for £75. We didn't receive the contract until after the programme went out and then it specified £75 inclusive when we had agreed £75 with expenses, so we crossed out "inclusive" and put in "with expenses" before we sent it back signed.

It's important to mention that the kind of expenses they accepted without question were loss of earnings, childminding, travel and props. They wouldn't pay our sta-

tionary, postage or phone calls and these were a heavy expense which will have to come out of the fee.

We've had many letters and phone calls supporting us since the programme, and offers of help. Some of the letters were heartbreaking ones from women telling us of their experiences. Our menopause leaflet was only mentioned briefly on the programme, but a surprising number of the letters were asking for this. There was a big increase in the numbers coming to Pregnancy Testing sessions, most of whom told us they had seen the programme. The local Brook Advisory Centre told us they had had a lot of phone calls at their next session, which they put down to our mention of them on the programme.

We were pleased enough with our work and with the response to feel that we would like a permanent record, so we are looking into the possibility of having a cassette made to show on portable closed-circuit television. Donations to help towards the expense would be very welcome. □

*There is an article in the current WACC newsletter about what we said and did in the programme, and this can be obtained from the Women's Centre, 11 Waverley Road, Redland, Bristol 6. Tel: 38120.*

## ITALY: ABORTION

**On January 12, police invaded an abortion clinic in Florence Italy and arrested the gynaecologist, Dr Conciari, and four women assistants. Seven women were awaiting abortions, already under anaesthetic.**

Nine women picketed, in the pouring rain, outside the Italian Embassy in London one week later in protest against the police action. They handed out leaflets, from which the following is an extract:

"Who benefits from these actions and laws? Worldwide the State, the Church and big business are trying to regulate women's reproduction.

"They say they're against murder - but they force us into backstreet abortions that murder us, and plan or turn a blind eye to the genocide of famine.

"They make us work, wageless at home and for pennies outside, and then expect us to pay hundreds for the control of our bodies.

"When too many people are their problem, abortions and sterilisation are condoned. In Pakistan recently even the Catholic Church has advocated forced abortion and sterilisation. 'It need not be a repressive sort of thing', said a missionary. 'But it must be compulsory'.

"We demand the release of those arrested in Florence, of those 263 women on trial in Trento, Italy. We demand the release of all women's bodies from the control of all states."



# PORTUGAL: WOMEN MOBBED

**"Two hundred women, in the maximum" attempted to burn a variety of symbols of femininity in Lisbon in January but their collective strength provoked "five or six thousand men" to disrupt this celebration of International Women's Year.**

The women who wrote 'Notes on Women in Portugal' (*Spare Rib* 31) received the following letter from Lisbon. They asked us to reprint it and to stress that people should take up the solidarity actions that the Portuguese women's movement needs.

Sisters,  
After the world-known Portuguese revolution, the 25th of April, we tried to do some work, as you already know. A few things were done as I told you when you came to see me in the Socialist Party.

Now we are asking for your help! To celebrate the International Women's Year we tried to demonstrate on Monday 13th January, at 6 o'clock in the afternoon. We left home and as soon as we arrived to the place, we were decided to speak and to do our work, which was to burn all the objects with which women have been oppressed, like: the feminine toys (dolls, little pots and pans, irons etc.) and the masculine toys (guns, tanks, 'action man' etc.); Portuguese law books that discriminate against women; pornographic magazines; romantic feminine books; all sorts of books where women are treated like an inferior being; books of study; several objects we were dressed with, symbolising the position of women in this society.

We were no more than 15 when we left home. We were dressed in different ways: a bride, a pregnant woman with a poster saying 'Children yes, but only if we want them!', a typical sexual object (long eye lashes, a violet wig, high red shoes, a necklass - very sexy and bouncy), a housewife, and one with a sheet in which was drawn a naked body with prices all over, just like a cow. The others carried posters with some sentences calling the attention to job discrimination, sexism and one or two jokes. We also had ten children with us; the youngest one was three! They were supposed to burn the toys.

Since five o'clock they waited for us. We started walking to the place we thought less crowded. As soon as we arrived and stopped, they saw us and started running and screaming: "Here they are! Let's go to them!"

They jumped on us and we were surrounded by thousands of men. It was impossible even to think of doing anything. They wouldn't respect even the children, whom we were only able to remove much later on. They separated us and after much struggle, they destroyed all the posters we carried. They undressed the ones who were masked; we heard all sorts of insults: "Women only in bed", "Go home and do your cooking", "Burn them..." etc. Some of us managed to escape, and the others really had to fight. All this lasted longer than two hours.

On our way back home, we saw they were trying to destroy the car where the children had been carried away and where we had all the things we intended to burn. Everything was stolen, books and magazines thrown up in the air. After they tried to turn the car upside down, we had to face them again until the car was removed.

Some hours later we knew that they had spanked an old lady who had brought a broom to burn them and they also undressed a young girl of seventeen, probably just coming from a school nearby.

**As there was nothing more we could do we went home, but we could hear and see them screaming and shouting for us for longer than two hours. The only thing we can compare this with is the spectacle of the Roman Coliseum, or the chase of the witches in the Middle Ages. We called the police several times, and at last they said that if there were many people they couldn't come!**

We ask you, please, to give all the publicity you can, to inform all the other feminist movements you are in touch with; to demonstrate and to press near the Portuguese Embassy and Government.

Besides this we would like to tell you that the condition of working women is worse than before, due to the crisis of employment. Several letters were sent and published on the newspaper asking the government to fire all the women so they could give place to "chiefs of the family".

None of the work contracts formulated after the 25th of April gives equal payment to women (40% less). In some place, like factories, they get less than the minimum established by law.

The only way of being able to do something in Portugal is with a strong international help. Sisterhood is Powerful

Teresa P Caldas  
Rua da Conceicao 17-4  
Lisboa  
Portugal

# USA: MAIDS SUE EMPLOYER



Jolly Robinson

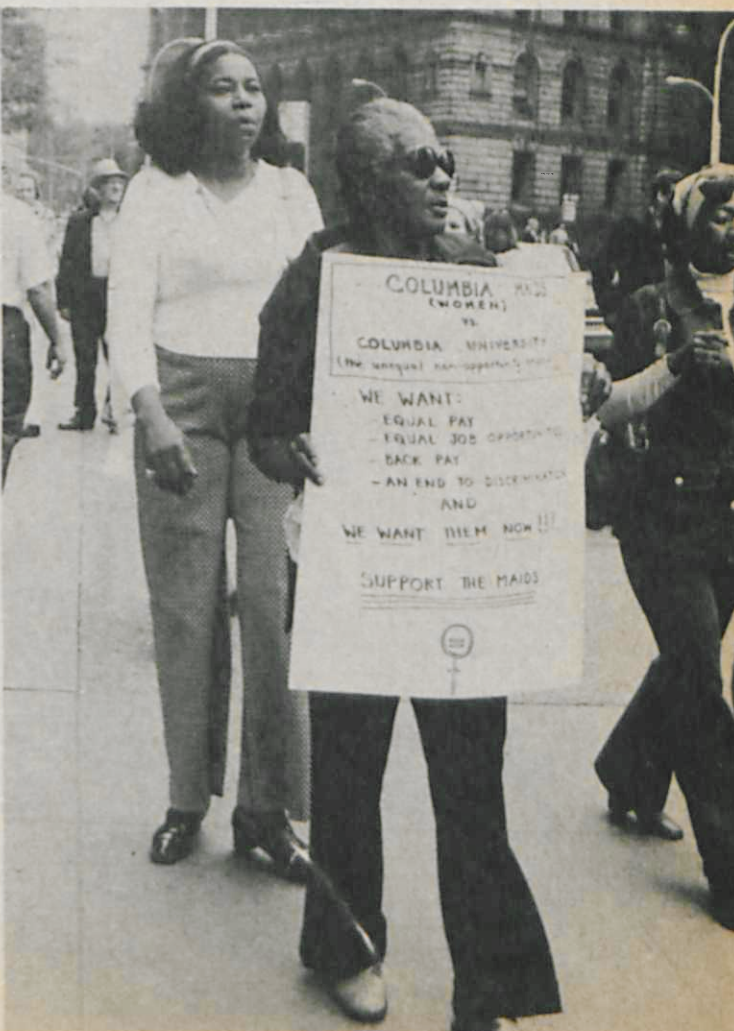
*Columbia University maids demonstrated at Foley Square, New York, last September. They're waiting now for the decision of a Federal Court trial on sex discrimination in the maintenance department of the University.*

*Women workers are contained in the lowest paid grades, as maids, seamstresses, elevator operators and attendants. The few women promoted into higher grades face continual harassment and get the heaviest chores.*

*Maids at Columbia earn \$19.60 less per week than janitors, though they do substantially the same work. Columbia contends that the janitors' work is heavier than the maids, that they must move 55 gallon drums, shovel snow, strip floors, climb ladders and scaffolding. These jobs, it turns out, are done quite infrequently and sometimes by 2, 3 or 4 men in a team. Also some janitors do not do them at all.*

*The maids' campaign started in 1972, when the Women's Affirmative Action Coalition of Columbia, a feminist organisation, fought a discriminatory lay-off with help from feminist lawyers.*

*Columbia is now under pressure not only from the maids but from the Department of Labour, which is bringing an action against the University for violating the Equal Pay Act. Esther Collier, a member of the Maids Committee, said, "After all these years they finally have to think about paying us for all the hard work we've done."*



Jolly Robinson



# CLASSIFIEDS

If you want to join or start a group, find work or a travel companion, start a household or share a house, having something to sell or swap . . . then run your own Classified Ad.

**Rates:** 5p per word, 10p caps. £1.50 for semi-display (semi-boxed ad.) 50p for box numbers.

**Payment:** Ads. must be prepaid and sent to Spare Rib, 9 Newburgh St., London W1A 4XS. Please make all cheques and PO's payable to Spare Ribs Ltd.

**Conditions:** Spare Rib reserves the right to refuse any classified ads.

**Copy date:** Feb 27 for March 26. Mar 28 for Apr 23.

Tick if Box No required

Tick if Semi-display required

I enclose £. . . . . for . . . . . no of issues.

Name: . . . . .

Address: . . . . .

Print your ad below in block capitals, one word in each box.

Underline any words you require in caps.

|    |  |  |
|----|--|--|
|    |  |  |
|    |  |  |
|    |  |  |
| 7  |  |  |
| 10 |  |  |
| 13 |  |  |
| 16 |  |  |
| 19 |  |  |
| 22 |  |  |
| 25 |  |  |
| 28 |  |  |
| 31 |  |  |
| 34 |  |  |

## Jobs

### RED LADDER THEATRE IS EXPANDING

wanted

#### 1. Actors/Actresses

for work in a non-hierarchical collective touring company, producing its own material and performing for predominantly Labour Movement audiences. Ability to play own instrument(s) an advantage.

(Equity members preferable)

#### 2. Administrator/organiser

administrative experience, Labour Movement experience, ability to negotiate bookings in Labour Movement context all helpful but also a willingness to participate in other areas of the group's work (except performance) is important.

Applications in writing by March 5th stating:

1. Theatrical/administrative, political experience.
2. Reasons for interest in this work.
3. When you can start.
4. Ability to move out of London to the North by the summer.
5. Where advert was read.
6. Telephone no. if possible; to 58 Wray Crescent, London N4 (Tel: 01-263 1053)

**Women's Research Centre** requires part-time Librarian to work for 6 months setting up resource centre. Applicants should write to Women's Research Centre, 13 Endsleigh Street WC1, stating experience and giving two references. Salary negotiable.

**BROOK Advisory Centres**, 233 Tottenham Court Rd., W1. Clinic Receptionist (full time, or two part-time) required. Salary £1300 pa (67p per hour) free lunches, four weeks hols, interesting and responsible job. Phone Pauline Giles 01-323 1522.

## General

**FINANCE** required for unsupported mothers commune Exeter, Contact Ann Beddow, 4 Devonshire Place, Exeter.

**We have set up a study group** to investigate the occurrence and treatment of rape, and as an important preliminary to our research we would be interested to hear from any doctors who have encountered this problem. We would like to know how far doctors consider rape as a medical problem and what advice and information they offer. We are interested to learn how the potential physical consequences of rape are managed e.g. possible VD and non-venereal genital infections, pregnancy, psychological effects (both long and short term).

Anyone who would be interested in co-operating, please write to Rape Medical Study Group, 26 Talfourd Rd, London SE15

## Playgroups

**Anyone in Chester area** interested in forming small informal happy playgroup telephone Diana Bennett, Chester 49521.

## Personal

**Northern gay women** please communicate Box no. 332

**VISA PROBLEM.** English woman and child finding attaining American visa impossible. If you are American male, single and finding British visas a problem, perhaps temporary conditional matrimony would be profitable to us both. Box no. 331

**Man (living W11)** middle-aged one child tall slim gentle capable needs unsexist woman who can put heart into 50-50 unhung relationship minus role playing. Box no. 335

**Woman of masculine psyche;** poet writer painter keenly interested in music seeks friends of similar sensitivity 30's, 40's Birmingham Midlands or preliminary correspondence Box no. 324

**A therapeutic community** very much needs more people to live and help in it. Please phone 01-677 1811, or write Gordon Phillips, c/o Moonfleet Bookshop, 39 Clapham Park Road, London SW4

**We are two gay women**, Swiss and Swedish who would like to integrate in a commune (arts, crafts agriculture, gardening). We would like to visit communes working in these fields with the view of joining one. Will be travelling around Europe in a dormobile from July 1975. Please write Ursula Giger and Ingrid Claessen, 3 Av. Allinges, 1225 Chene-Bourg, Switzerland.

**Birkenhead lesbian collective.** Tuesdays 8pm. Ground Floor Flat, 35 Rock Park, Rock Ferry, Merseyside or Ring Clare 045 744121

## Meetings

**International Tribunal** for Crimes against Women: Planning meeting for British group, March 2, 101 Gower Street, London WC1. Further details (eg time of day) from Jalna Hanmer, 01-435 6806 (evenings), or write 20 Thurlow Road, NW3. The Tribunal desperately needs money.

**The Compulsory Pregnancy Lobby** - Then and Now, public lecture by Madeleine Simms, University College, Gower St, 17th March, 6pm. All Welcome.

**South Wales Regional Women's Conference**, March 1st, at the Friends Meeting House, 43 Charles Street, Cardiff, 10am-6pm further details phone Cardiff 28908

## For Sale

**Posters for Women's Liberation** include 'free castration on demand' 40p 'Parity begins at Home' 45p 'Women are Revolting' 30p. All 20" x 30". Postage 15p. Posters printed cheaply, (including advertisements, stickers) for fund raising, demo's etc. (women only) write to Ms P Dalton, 26 South Ave., Brighton BN2 2BP

**WORKING WOMEN'S CHARTER CAMPAIGN POSTERS** available 20p. BADGES reduction for orders over ten. Contact Handley, 24 Vicarage Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham 14

#### Spend Women's Liberation.

Send Spare Rib cards, with women's centres listed on back. Pack of 10 with envelopes 50p From Sandra Oliver, 9 Northumberland Ave. London E12 5HF.

**STOP.** You can now buy our super high-quality micromesh TIGHTS at bargain prices. 12 pairs £1.95 + 15p post. One size American Tan. Mail order only from SNOOPY (SR), 96 Kempton Walk, Croydon.

## Accommodation

**Student (Social Sciences)** with two girls 5 and 6 would like to share house with other women/children. Not too far from Oxford Circus. Max rent £30pm Phone Sue 673 0486

**Flatshare N8** Jean 348 5118

**Modernised Pied à Terre, W.C.1.** Semi-basement. Bed sitter (Wall bed, fitted cupboards, carpets, curtains etc) Bathroom, Kitchen/Pantry - overlooking Plant area. Leasehold 36 years. £10,750 Enquiries: 01-278 1501

**Charming Detached Georgian Cottage** (2 hrs London - ¼ hr Bristol/Bath) Consists Porch, Plant room, Hall, Cioakroom, Sitting room, Dining room, Kitchen, Cellar, 3 Bedrooms, Bathroom & small garden overlooking surrounding countryside. Wotton-under-Edge, Gloucs. £16,250. Enquiries: 01-278 1501

**Women needed share farmhouse**, three acres, animals etc. Mid-Wales hard work but good times. Sarah, 1A Rossett Avenue, Liverpool 17.

**Young working mother** with son one year old urgently need a flat. Furnished or unfurnished in London willing to pay a deposit. Phone Mary 387 9321 Ext. 283

## Services

**GAYWAY**, your new personal friendship service. Let GAYWAY BE YOUR WAY OF MAKING YOUR DAY. Full discretion, and that special personal touch with all our members. (Annual membership £5). Entitles you to up to 10 contacts, plus our other services. Either send your membership fee now, with all your details, or just send a 4½p stamp for our details. We're here to help you find the right person. Let Gayway be your way of making your day. Gayway, 77 Fortis Green Road, London N10.

**Photodates.** You choose from hundreds SAE for free details. CEI (SR) 3 Manor Rd. Romford, Essex.

**Primal Therapy:** 241 Uxbridge Rd, W12

**Woman Psychotherapist (Jungian)** now has vacancies Highgate area. Tel: 01-348 5593.

**Carlotta Palfi, psychotherapist** English and German. Battersea Park. 01-720 1667.

**Female/female exclusive** introductions highly confidential service for release friendship liberation etc. SAE - "Lesbos and Ariadne" The Golden Wheel, Liverpool L15 3HT

**Homosexual Women** and men can ring ice-breakers on 01-274 9590 every evening of the year between 7.30 & 10.30 to talk over their problems with other gay people

## Books etc.

**The Revolutionary Dynamics of Women's Liberation** by Sabina Roberts. This pamphlet provides a perspective for the present Women's liberation movement and shows the way forward to MASS ACTION on the streets. From Ann Fiander 2 Cobbs Cottages B/S Alresford, Hants. 15p + 8p postage or Compendium Books.

**Women's Liberation Literature** or any books. Send SAE for free booklist to H Rutovitz, 31 Royal Terrace, Edinburgh.

**New Design W.L. Badge** 14p (incl postage). Stop Rape American pamphlet on self-defence for women (illustrated) 26p (incl postage) From Sisterhood Books, c/o 22 Great Windmill St, London W1.

**SAPPHO**, the only lesbian feminist magazine in Europe. 40p inc. post BCM/PETREL London WC1 6XX. Meetings held every Tuesday, 7.30 pm upstairs room. The Chepstow Pub, Chepstow Place, London W2, off Truscott's Corner at the intersection Westbourne Grove, 3 Pembridge Villas, opp Odeon Cinema and Elliotts Shoe Shop. 40p admission for non-subscribers.

## Groups

**DERBY.** Anyone interested in forming women's group contact Derby 27574

**Clockhouse Area, Beckenham.** Anyone interested in starting a group? Phone 658 3636

**Small LESBIAN FEMINIST group** emerging in Newcastle. Interested sisters please contact Beckett, 7 Ridley Gdns, Swalwell, Newcastle NE16 3HT.

**Slough area.** New lesbian group any women interested write box no. 334

**PUTNEY Women's Liberation Group.** New members welcome. Phone Val 731 3473

**Ruislip Women's Liberation group.** Now meeting fortnightly on Mondays. Please contact Brenda, Ruislip 73284, or Gill, Ruislip 72345, for details.

**Homosexual/Bisexual Women** join the Campaign for Homosexual Equality. CHE is your voice - make it louder! Meetings and socials throughout Britain. Send SAE 9 x 4 CHE(332) 28 Kenedy St. Manchester 2

## Travel

**Guaranteed low cost jet flights** Australia New Zealand, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Manila, Tokyo, Bangkok, India, Pakistan, Tehran, Nigeria Ghana, South Africa, Nairobi, Morocco, Tunis, Canary Islands, Greece and rest of Europe. Jet-set Travel, 5th Floor, 62 Oxford Street, London W1. 01-637 1971 / 580 3298.



# Info..Odds & Sods..Advice

Inquiries answered by Wisty Hoyland

## Duplication

I have free use of a gestetner duplicator so I am going to put together a series of five sheet pamphlets covering the following subjects:

1. Women's short stories and poems.
2. The Woman in Judaism.
3. Non-sexist children's literature, coupled with women's books, pamphlets, etc.
4. Women's experiences with doctors, psychiatrists, VD clinics.

I would like to hear from as many people as possible on these subjects so I can start the printing by March. Anyone wishing to receive one or all copies of the pamphlets should write to me at the address below enclosing an s.a.e. plus a voluntary contribution of 5p per copy to pay for paper. I'm also running a craft workshop and a paper every other month for general news and poetry and stories. New people always welcome.

Yours with love,  
Sheril Berkovitch.  
Happy New Year, keep up the good work.  
30 Norwich Road,  
Forest Gate,  
London E7.

£150 for an abortion when they aren't pregnant. They would never know. So I would like to throw out a word of warning to all women who have been told by their doctors that they are pregnant:

1. If you suspect that you are being over-charged or that you might not be pregnant, get a second opinion. Many clinics do tests for free, others may charge upwards from £1.50. Don't use tests from chemists as they are generally less reliable than the ones done at clinics.

2. Find out where you can get the least expensive, safest abortions. *Alternative London* is a good place to look. Look for charity abortion clinics, not commercial clinics.

Secondly, I would like to ask all women who have been through this experience and discovered that they are not pregnant, to write to me care of *Spare Rib*.

Thanks,  
Kate Griffiths.

\* For help on pregnancy and abortion, contact also HELP Advisory Service at 10 Wharf Road, London W2. Tel: 402 5233. Ask for Sarah or Maggie.

## Education at Home

Could I ask for help. I am the mother of a three-year-old daughter and a one time disillusioned teacher.

I am very interested in the concept of teaching my child at home. The standardisation of roles, thoughts and ideas which is common in many schools horrifies me.

I am well aware that it is quite legal to educate a child at home but I would be interested to hear from anyone with first hand experience of it, the problems and the compensations.

I would like eventually to compile a booklet informing parents of this option and outlining the good and the bad points, etc.

Thank you,  
love,  
Jennie White.  
7 Park Top,  
Pudsey,  
W. Yorks

\* Yes it is legal but I think you have to prove that you are a competent teacher to the authorities. Try contacting the

Education Collective in Manchester about this issue too. Their address is 44 Denison Road, Manchester 16.

## Men Against Sexism

I am writing on behalf of the members of our men's consciousness raising group. All of us have some involvement in the anti-sexism movement other than our CR group, which has been going for four months now.

We are interested in corresponding with women who are thinking/active about anti-sexism, and about being a person. We have a large assortment of backgrounds and look forward to a fruitful exchange of letters.

People interested can write to us using the address below.

I am currently working at the University of NSW. During International Women's Year I shall be running a men's CR group and I'll be involved in other anti-sexism work.

Hopefully next year will be a very good year.

Greg Seekee.  
PO Box 205,  
Glebe,  
New South Wales, 2037,  
Australia.

## Women and Architecture

I am a fifth year architecture student studying for my Diploma in Architecture. I am writing my thesis on Women and Architecture and am anxiously gathering material. Apart from looking at buildings designed by women, and looking at how various architectural ideologies have related to a feminist ideology, I would very much like to meet or contact any feminist architects. If you can help me on any of these points or suggest any relevant literature I should be very grateful.

Thank you,  
Yours sincerely,  
Caroline Lwin.

\* There are two women in the Diploma School at the Architectural Association who are doing their History Thesis on the roles of women in architecture. Their names are Marion Masheder and Sarah Strong and you can contact them through the Information Centre at the AA, 34-36

Bedford Square, London WC1. You could also contact the women's group that has been meeting at the AA since November, and who are specifically concerned with architecture in relation to the women's movement.

## Breast Cancer

I saw an advertisement for a leaflet in the publication *Women's Report* but have been unable to get hold of a copy. Writing to them brought no reply, so hope to get more sense from you.

The leaflet is called 'Breast Cancer: Self Examination, An Aid to Early Detection', published by BUPA and Medicine at 40p. BUPA politely returned my 40p and clearly never heard of the leaflet and my bookshop has never heard of Medicine. No address for getting the leaflet was given in *WR*, so I would be grateful if you could help me in any way.

Yours sincerely,  
Liz Austin.

\* BUPA do in fact publish the leaflet and you can obtain it by writing to Mrs M. Adams at BUPA, or simply by phoning and leaving your name and address. The address is Provident House, Essex Street, WC, and the telephone number is 01-353 9451.

## Booklists

I am looking for references to articles, journals, books, etc. published in Britain on women and the media, women and fashion, women and art, cinema, etc. I hear that you do provide this kind of information service and hope very much that you can help as I have never seen any literature on the above, except one book on women in the cinema.

Many thanks,  
In sisterhood,  
Roisin McDonough.

\* We don't publish a booklist ourselves but if you write to the Women's Liberation Workshop, 38 Earlham Street, London WC2, they will send you an extensive reading list and can also provide some publications if you wish. Write also to Rising Free Bookshop for a list of their publications on women, at 197 Kings Cross Road, London WC1.

# Info..Odds & Sods..Advice



# INSIDE

Maureen Reynolds was sent to prison for violence. Only 3% of all 'serious offences' committed by women over a year involve violence against others. Like the vast majority, Maureen's 'crime' was unpremeditated and committed in the home under extreme emotional pressure. She should never have been sent to prison. Neither should all the other women prisoners whose 'offences' are reactions to the female role, or ways of dealing with the demands of being a woman in the face of poverty, poor housing and ill health. Most women are sentenced for petty theft (shop lifting to feed and clothe a family), prostitution, or receiving stolen goods (helping and supporting a husband or lover). Angela Weir discussed sex role related 'offences' in *Spare Rib* No.11.

Today the more obviously dramatic stresses which women endure are coming to light. Maureen was a battered wife, but in 1968 when she was sentenced, battered wives were still hidden behind their front doors. Would she receive the same sentence today now that the context of her 'crime' is public knowledge? Would she be sentenced at all?

Prison is destructive. Many women find it impossible to cope with the shock of institutional life. Others adapt all too easily, and with their feelings of dependency and inadequacy drastically increased, they become hopelessly institutionalised and incapable of surviving outside.

Prison is supposed to 'encourage them (the inmates) to lead a good and useful life'. Maureen was sent to prison because she once expressed the violence that, until then, she had turned against herself. Yet as the Radical Alternatives to Prison Group points out, 'the very act of shutting people up in a closed institution creates more violence.' Maureen's story speaks for itself.

Interview by Rosie Parker

I was charged with wounding with intent, but there wasn't any intent. It was completely out of my control — I just reacted immediately to the situation. That's what used to bug me in there, thinking about it — I could so easily have been doing life.

My husband was very violent — I was battered stupid for ten years. It got to the stage where there was nowhere I could run to because the police got fed up with me, and my husband would come and smash the windows wherever I stayed — my mother got sick of having her windows smashed. It went on and on and on. I tried to commit suicide twice. Then one day they sent me home from work because I was ill. All I wanted to do was lie down, I went upstairs, walked into the room and he was with this chick on the bed. I didn't have anything against the girl, she was just the latest in a long line, but I went . . . and I just picked up . . . I didn't even know if it was him or her . . . it all seemed to be coming out.

I was on £20 bail for three months, everybody told me that getting £20 bail meant that it wasn't serious, the police said I wouldn't go down because they knew I'd had a lot of aggravation with my husband. Still, I realised I needed a solicitor so I walked along the street near the law courts where there are a lot of solicitors and I went into the first one I came to. I only saw him twice in the three months, and I saw the barrister twenty minutes before I went into court.

Normally if violence, which can attract high penalties, is involved in a case, a solicitor will arrange at least one conference between the barrister and the defendant. It will be particularly important when the defendant's personal history is so relevant. Maureen was on legal aid and payments are not likely to encourage barristers and solicitors to do more work than they might be remunerated for.

Yes, the first time I'd ever set eyes on the barrister was sitting outside the Assizes. I felt so alone and I was terrified. In those days there weren't any women's groups or anything like that, and none of my family were up, they didn't even know about it — I didn't want anyone to know.

You go in and there they are, all in their gowns with the bloody judge sitting up there in his big wig. There was one woman on the jury, one. Thinking back, I realise I should have said this, should

have done that, but they are throwing questions at you, and you're in that witness box . . .

There is a right of challenge that a barrister can use to have seven members of the jury changed, although they can be replaced only by other potential jurors who have been summoned for service at the same time. "An inexperienced defendant is at a disadvantage in court even if well educated and articulate, but for those who have little education, who are scared or nervous and unable to express themselves in the kind of language they believe is expected of them in court, the handicap can be crippling, particularly if they wish to deny the offence or plead mitigating circumstances." Susanne Dell, *Silent In Court — a study of the legal representation of women who went to Holloway*.

I was the only witness for the defence, and the judge threw the police evidence out of court because it was contradictory. First of all this sergeant came on, and he was asked if I'd seemed upset when I was at the police station after it had happened. He replied that I'd been perfectly calm. Of course I'd been in a terrible state, crying and really sort of gone.

And then this other policeman came in and he was terrified, you could see he was awed by the whole thing, he was only young. He was asked, "Was she crying? Was she upset?" "Yes", he replied. The judge turned round to the jury and said, "I want you to ignore the police evidence, I'm not going to allow it." But what the sergeant said about me had already been pretty damaging. He claimed I'd said, "I did it 'cos she was messing about with my old man." That's just not something I'd say.

"We suggest Emergency Legal Advice Services attached to police stations and available night and day to people held in custody at the station. (This was recommended to the Widgery Committee on Legal Aid and rejected.) Advice centres attached to police stations have been shown to work in Holland." RAP.

In fact all I could say at the police station after it happened was "my little boy", "my little boy". Steve was at home on his own, I was worried he'd wake up and wouldn't find me there in the morning — he'd been through so much. That's all I kept going on about.



Pl. 269  
F. wing



A view of F. wing in Holloway, a long term wing. By Pat Arrowsmith



In the court they wanted to discredit me as an honest witness. They wanted to bring up in court, in front of the jury, in the middle of the case, that I had had a previous conviction — one for selling drinks without a licence, and one for being involved in a theft which meant I'd received something when I was seventeen (a long time ago). So they sent out the jury while they debated this point, well the jury must have known that something was going on. The judge then decided to allow my previous convictions, and the prosecutor tore me to pieces, "How can a woman who has been involved in all this be an honest witness" — you know.

On the last day of my trial the judge had me remanded in custody.

"Fewer remands in custody will also reduce the number of women and girls subsequently sentenced to prison as there is strong evidence from this country and America that apart from any other considerations, the mere fact of being remanded in custody rather than on bail significantly affects (adversely) both the finding of guilt and the sentence." RAP.

I went all the way from Birmingham to Holloway for the night, and came back next morning shattered — and then back to Holloway again — I got three years. The judge had made a big statement a few days before about the rise in violence and the need for law and order. And anyone who came into his court . . . I only got that judge at the last minute, it was a switch, just pure luck (or bad luck).

## HOLLOWAY

I was taken from Birmingham to Holloway and arrived at reception with quite a few other women. There you are put into a box, we call them horse boxes though they are not as big as horse boxes. They each contain a little seat and if you sit on it there's about a foot between you and the door and the walls. You strip and put on a dressing gown; the only thing you are allowed to keep on is your wedding ring, if you've got one, and anything else that won't come off. They couldn't get my bracelets off me. Then you are taken to where they check your clothes in. They make you take the dressing gown off, weigh you and search you all in front of the screws and the prisoners who work in reception.

I was numb, I couldn't believe that it was happening to me. After you are convicted the change in people's attitudes towards you is, well, extraordinary, and suddenly you have no control over anything — they are all in control of you.

After you've had your clothes checked in you're taken back to the boxes where you sit and wait for anything up to four hours to see the doctor. He says, "Had any serious diseases? Got anything wrong with you? Are you on drugs?" And you say, "Yea, I'm on this or that", and he writes it down and gives it to you as long as it's not heroin or anything. Then you go to see the nurse, you take off your clothes again and she searches you for crabs, and you're back in your box again 'till they take you to whatever room you've been assigned to.

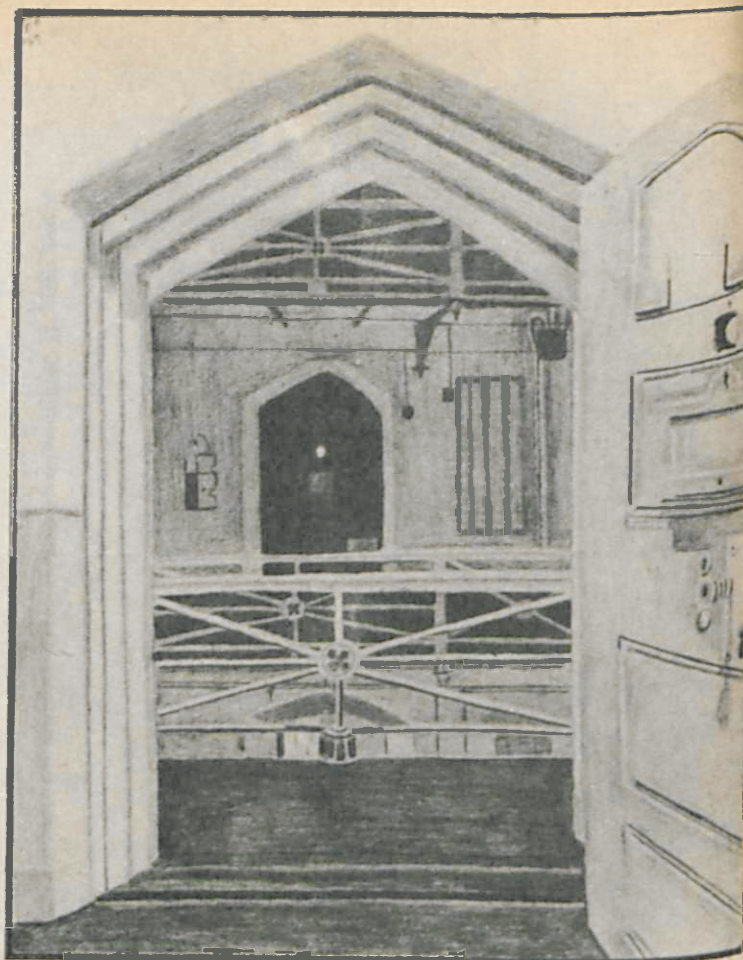
I was given a great bundle of blankets to carry with my clothes and everything I'd got. It was like nothing I had ever experienced. It was just like you see in the pictures, all those landings, you know — and the smell. There are all the bogs out on the landings, it's what they call the recess, a row of sluices where you sling your slop — you know you sling it out in the mornings.

I went to get my jug of water, and that's it — you're just locked in. I couldn't believe that, could you? I thought they must let you out again, for something, a class — but no, it wasn't until 8.00 the next morning. I kept waiting all night. And you hear the voices, all calling to one another from window to window. They scream abuse at the male screws going round with dogs, patrolling the grounds. They must have been really thick, really thick skinned to take that, because I couldn't take all that abuse. But I think they are thick skinned — they stop thinking of you as people. That's the only way they could do it.

The screaming. I couldn't sleep for smashing windows. Every night women slash their arms in the windows, often because their best friend has been moved away from them or because they are awaiting trial and haven't heard from anybody. The windows are often not mended and it's right draughty. You stick your jumper in the holes.

In the morning, on a security wing, first thing you do is empty your pot or bucket, get your water and have a wash. You try to get the tap first because the water is cold by the time the last woman gets there. Then you get your tin tray and your mug, and march downstairs to what they call the 'ones', the 'twos' and the 'threes' — all those landings — then you get breakfast (sometimes porridge,

Pat Arrowsmith drew this view from her cell when she was serving six months in 1968/9 for organising and taking action against the American war in Vietnam.



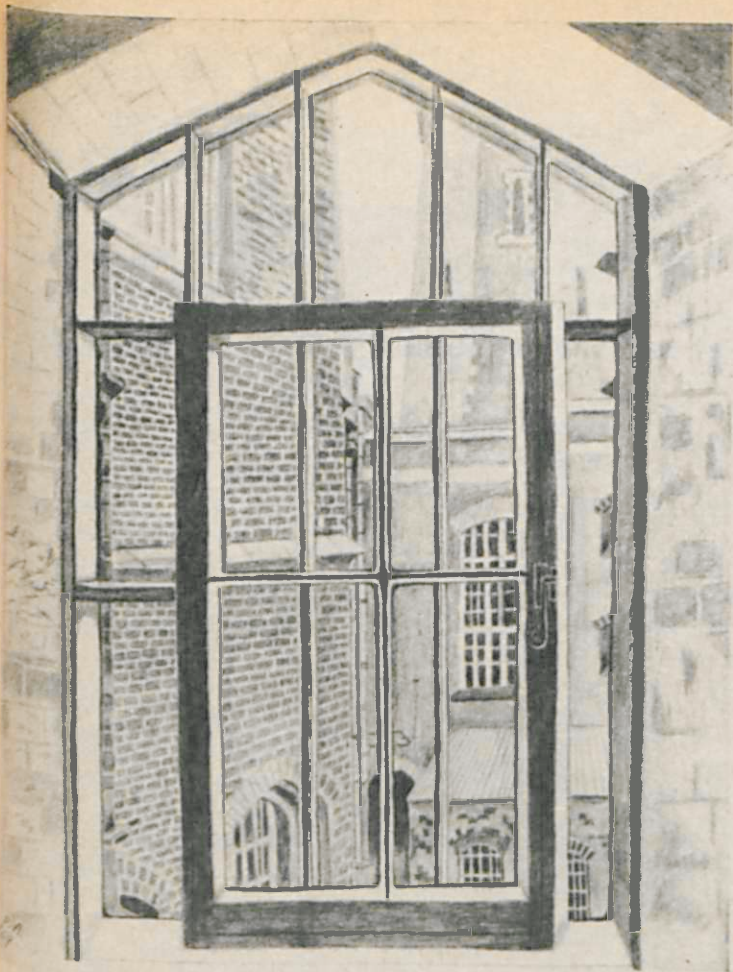
sometimes cornflakes and occasionally an egg). You take it back upstairs to your cell. After breakfast you go straight to work. You come back from work at a quarter to twelve, and you go up and collect your tray, and you come down and get your dinner, and you are locked in your cell again to eat it. You go back to work at one thirty, knock off at four, go back upstairs — get your tin tray, come down, get your tea, take it upstairs, get your jug of water, and you're locked in, and that's it. At supper time they don't let you out, just pour in either soup or tea. It's a bog and you're eating and sleeping in it.

Today there is usually more than one woman to a cell. Women in the remand centre if they chose not to work, or if there is no work for them, are locked up during the day and are only allowed out for an hour in the evening every other day. (Over three quarters of women entering Holloway are remands in custody — 80% are not sentenced after spending time in prison). Other prisoners are now not locked up from tea time until bed time at 7.15pm or 8.15pm.

It's the little things that get you down, like not being able to walk through a door and make a cup of tea. And their attitude towards you; you hear them talking about you as if you're not there, 'how to lock them in', 'how many have you got out', etc. And the sound of the keys all the time, when I came out I really missed that, you know, because that's what you've lived with. A lot of the screws, the older ones, have got something wrong with their hands, after all those years of having to pull it and turn it, they get arthritis. The keys are on their belts and when they are opening the door it looks as if they are attached to the door. And they sort of swing their keys as they go along. It's weird because prison is their whole life too. After they lock you in, you see their eye at the spy hole. The screw on duty at night has no keys. To get them she has to go to the centre and come back with another screw who has the keys after the day screws give them in. If it was a real emergency you'd be dead by the time they reached you.

I lost my appeal, they refused my appeal, and took sixty days waiting time off me as well. It took me nine months before I realised what had happened to me, then I got really depressed. Before that — it is such a funny feeling to explain — it was like a dream really. I knew it was all happening but I just seemed to be going through all the motions and not being there. What did worry





me was that for two weeks I didn't know where Steve was, he was eleven at the time. Eventually I stood on the wing and just screamed for the welfare person. They are so overworked — they have to deal with the whole bloody prison.

After six months I was sent to Askam Grange, an open prison which I could not stand. I think it was partly because you could just walk out — the gate was wide open. I couldn't stand the other women there either. Most of them are stars — first time in nick — they just sit around — they're really sort of brainwashed. They are like robots sitting there knitting. A lot of them were middle-aged ladies, who had just done a post office book or a cheque. They were good ladies, just dying of shame at being in there. All the best prisoners are sent to Askam Grange, or prisoners who have been in a long time.

What I really minded was that it was too far for my mother to bring my son to see me. You were allowed a monthly visit from your family and there was a welfare visit every three months when the authorities had to bring your child to see you.

Today women in open prisons and stars are allowed fortnightly visits.

## ESCAPE

I asked twice to go back to Holloway but they said no. I said, OK I'll go myself, and I did. Two of us came out, but I didn't want to stay out because I figured they'd get me in the end and anyway I could never go home and be with my Steve.

We had a couple of days out, and then went and knocked on the gate at Holloway. They wouldn't let us in. "Visiting time is over", he said. "Oh, well, please yourself", I said.

I went up in front of what they call a V.C. — a visiting committee of magistrates — for escaping from Askam Grange. You are marched in, and stood in front of these lady magistrates with a screw on either side of you — up close to stop you attacking somebody.

They called me by my number, 89745, Reynolds, have you anything to say — and it freaks you out the way they say that. I just said that I'd wanted to be in London so Steve could be brought to see me. "Right", they said, "28 days loss of privileges, 28 days behind the door, 28 days loss of remission and 28 days loss of pay."

I couldn't believe it. That was another 28 days, on top of the six weeks they had taken off me on my appeal. It was the same sentence as someone who had been out for six months and had been caught by the police. I was fighting mad, certainly not numb any more.

I was in solitary for a month.

I think a lot of women get used to it, because it is usually the same women who go there, you know, the people who won't co-operate. And sometimes it seems to me that the more they do to you the more you sort of fight. I found that, anyway, the more they came down on me.

You only come out of your cell to go to the bog, and that is when everyone else is locked up, so you don't have contact with anyone. You are in artificial light all the time — there is opaque glass in the window and a dim bulb. There is no heating and the ventilation is fixed. At first you are given no bedding, just a mattress with a strip cover and you put on a strip jacket which is made of thick cotton to prevent people tearing it and committing suicide, I suppose.

They told me that they were sending me to Styal in Cheshire. They can't do anything while you have a petition going through to the Home Office. I petitioned twice to the Home Office, and I thought I'd keep petitioning. They are not supposed to refuse you a petition but after two they wouldn't let me send any more.

When I came out of solitary they put me with the short term prisoners. You can hear them in the morning being unlocked to go out. And you see the same people come in again and again; come in, do 14 days, go out, come in, do a month.

At that time they refused to let you off the short term wing, which was stricter than other wings, until you'd had a V.D. test and seen the psychiatrist.

One day they told me I was going to Styal the next morning — I was fighting mad and told them that if they wanted me there they'd have to drag me.

Well, they have got these two men who work on the hospital wing and walk around with white coats on, they are supposed to be for people who are troublesome. They are the ones who strip you naked and throw you in the padded cells. You know, if you are playing at not coming out of your cell or something. Anyway, they came for me next morning, and they got the men, and they just stuck something in me, I don't know what it was but I was just like a zombie — all the way to Styal I didn't know where I was.

Women in Holloway are heavily tranquilised: valium, nuactil and largactil are the drugs most frequently used.

I think the men really enjoy it. I've seen them drag a coloured girl across the centre by the hair because she refused to go to the punishment block. I think that if they have got someone who is really troublesome, they will try and provoke them to be violent, so they can certify them.

Holloway began drafting in two screws from Pentonville within the last ten years. When Pat Arrowsmith was in the punishment cells they threw another prisoner into a cell so violently that she broke her arm and was given no treatment for three days.

I've seen people come in there just full of life, really full of life, and been sort of vegetables when they go out. I noticed it when I went to Styal and came back down to Holloway for my divorce. A girl who had been a real sort of rebel just a few months before, when I came back she was just sitting on the stairs. I couldn't believe it. I was told she'd had ECT. It was unbelievable, it was like it wasn't the same person.

## STYAL

When I arrived at Styal I went in front of the board, it consists of the governor and the assistant governor, priest, welfare and somebody else. I was screaming and shouting, "I'm not fucking staying, I'll get out of here." So then I was on escort which means that everywhere you go you've got a screw with you, even when you go to the bog.

They put me in where they make the grey jumpers the men wear in prison. Those machines were going all day long and I just sat and stared into space. Some women love the job in the machine shop top line because you can get 90p a week instead of 30p, but you have to put up with the noise and the intensity. I was quite lucky because the screw was really nice, she was really beautiful, she shouldn't have been there. She became quite concerned as I looked a bit of a mess; I was very pale and sort of half dead. So they put



me on an outside working party where I was a bricky's labourer — mixed cement and carried bricks.

Styal is a security prison which used to be a children's home, then a refugee camp. There are all these big red brick houses with names like Elizabeth Fry — that's the long term house. Styal has got the biggest turnover of staff of any prison because they hate it being bound by the petty rules and regulations as much as the prisoners. For example you can lose three days remission for smoking in the wrong place.

They had these patrols at night; they go round in stockinged feet with gloved keys to see who is in bed with anybody else. If they caught you out of bed you'd go straight down to Bleak House for the night — that's the punishment block. Every night they would have a sort of swoop, and you know you would stand at the bars in your nightie looking down at some other poor soul being escorted down the block. Every little thing that happens is a talking point for days — "they are raiding Sarah Martin House tonight, oh, there's so and so, and so and so."

They'd be put in solitary and go in front of the governor next day, and lose a week's pay. You have 30p a week, and out of that you have to buy tobacco, shampoo, matches, letters. You are entitled to one free letter a week and you could buy one more out of your wages. It's hard for a woman whose family is in Jamaica.

The average weekly wage is now 63p a week

If you have money on you when you're put away it's taken off you but you are allowed to buy certain things with it, for instance, if you want to crochet you are allowed to use money from your 'property' to buy wool. And if you are transferred from Holloway or Risley to Styal, you have to make sure that your money is transferred with you. I know of a woman whose money didn't reach her for six months.

To go back to letters — letters sent to you can easily get held up. A letter from a friend I really wanted to hear from was held up because she'd written, "You lot who are reading this — just fuck off". It never reached me.

If you want to get money out of your property you have to make an AG application — an application to the assistant governor. One day you can ask for money out of your property. The next day you can ask for clothes. If you bring in three sets of clothes with you, you don't have to wear prison clothing. The night you arrive you have to sit and embroider your name on your clothes. Along with your clothes you are allowed to bring in one lipstick, one eyebrow pencil and one mascara. In Holloway women make bags — they're called dollybags — to carry round their valuables like mascara and soap — because the cells are open during work hours and things get nicked. Toothpaste is considered valuable because you only get tooth powder in there.

Each house at Styal had a different library day. It's quite hard to get an exercise book, you have to say exactly what you want it for and why it's necessary for you to have it. You are not supposed to use it for anything except study. You have to promise faithfully that you won't write in it about yourself, or about your crime, or about the prison or about other prisoners. Then if you want to take it out with you, you have to give it to the governor a month before you go. I started to get books and things and read a lot. It kept me sane. A lot of women inside can't read. For those who can't read well they have these big books with huge print. They are like kids books which is ridiculous, just because people can't read small print it doesn't mean they want Mary-went-down-the-road-to-get-mummy's-shopping sort of books.

The classes are terrible at Styal. It's compulsory to go to two — it's nearly all needlework, dressmaking and cooking.

Another thing that's funny about Styal is that if you want to see the doctor you have to book the night before. So if you're going to be sick you have to know 24 hours in advance or else you can't see the doctor. That's the truth. They will let you see the doctor if you insist, but they'll get at you and say "you should have booked last night."

There are lots of prison lawyers, you know, people telling you what to do and how to go about this or that. In Styal I was in the long term house where it was more or less a dog-eats-dog situation. People become very possessive about little things. If you're doing a long time you are allowed to have your own tea cup, some had a whole fucking tea set. Some would kill you for their own tea cup and their footstool — you know, respectable type ladies with their little possessions and their little rooms, they feel secure and can't

survive outside. A lot of the women I was with had been coming in all their lives. They started off when they were twenty, got nine months, and then got 18 months. They were usually the people who did fraud — cheques — and ended up doing five or six years.

You even get a sort of upper class distinction thing where the long term prisoners in for classy crimes sort of look down their noses on the bed and breakfast prisoners.

It's the privileges which divide the women because they are so dead scared of losing them. What they do is to make someone house leader who is meant to be responsible and to see that everything goes quietly at night. Divide and conquer. The only place where there's any solidarity is on the punishment block.

Still, you do make real friends because you go through so much together. I made one friend who I still see often. She helped me inside because she was into Buddhism and things like that, and I got interested. I gave her one of my bracelets — the ones they couldn't get off me in Holloway. You aren't allowed to give things away, and she got caught wearing it. She was given 28 days behind the door (solitary) because she wouldn't say who had given it to her. I owned up and got seven days.

There are endless little rules like that. You are not allowed to have a photograph of yourself in there — in case you remember who you are, I suppose — but you can have a picture of your family. You are never allowed to take your tights off even if it's boiling hot. And you're not supposed to talk about the prison — of course you talk about nothing else. Even at the group therapy sessions you are not allowed to complain about the prison, so you complain about each other.

Every so often magistrates come round and they say "Have you got any complaints?" But if you do complain there are all the repercussions after they've gone. You are hauled up in front of the governor. "Why did you complain? If you have anything to complain about, why didn't you complain to me?" Anyway, as a prisoner your word is nothing — nothing you say is ever believed. If you have got a complaint against a screw, you know before you go into the governor that you have got no chance at all.

The chief screw at Styal was an ex-army type — quite a lot of screws are. One day she burst into our place, turned on some of the itchy types and said, "What would you do if there was a war on?" We just looked at her.

When a prison officer comes into a room, you have to jump straight up and say "Good morning Miss" and "Good morning Madam" to the governor when she makes her daily inspection. She says "Good morning Ladies" and then they put out two little plates, and a little tray with a cloth, knife, fork and spoon, and she has a little taste of the day's meal. "Oh, very nice today, so and so," she says to the prisoner who is cooking for the 15 or 20 people in the house.

One day she was taking some visiting magistrates round when I was doing this enlightening work — stuffing dolls. The impression was given that we were doing it for sick children, but it leaked out that these dolls were being sold for £1.60 in Australia and we were getting 30p a week.

Not only do you have to work all day, but you have to get up at six in the morning to do all your shitty little house jobs before breakfast, like sweeping and polishing.

I always thought that prison would never affect me. I always said that I wouldn't let it affect me when I came out. But you've had time to think in there, and I became much more tolerant of other women — you start to look for the reason behind people's actions — but I also realised what people could do to other people, things I'd never have believed, and I ended up thoroughly disillusioned with so-called justice.

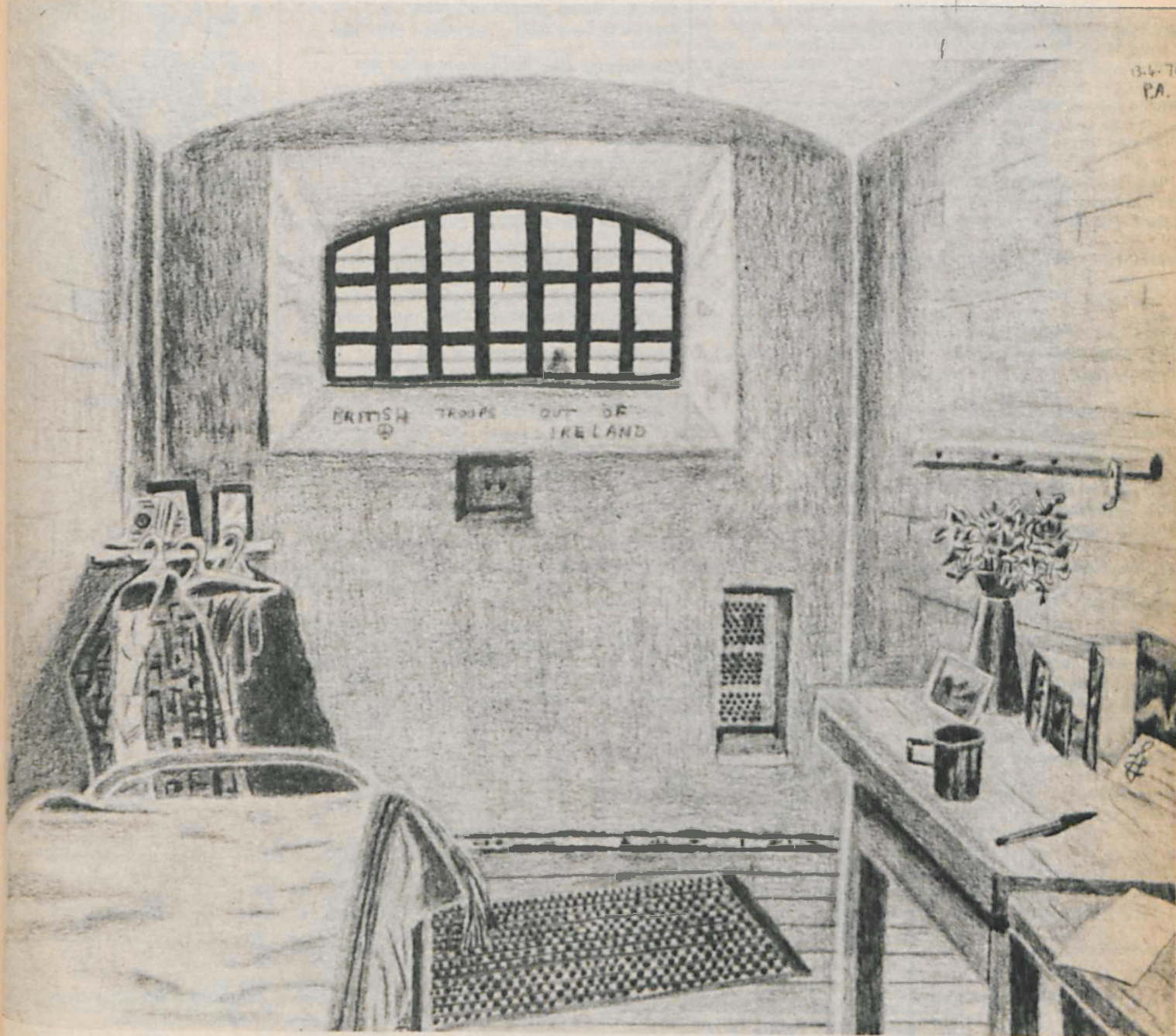
Suddenly you are shoved outside when, for three years you haven't had to think. You don't make decisions there at all. Then you're out and you've got to find somewhere to live, you've got to find a job, you've got to start taking care of your kid-again who has become a little stranger — it's really scary.

So much seems to have changed and there is nobody you know any more. You've been through something they haven't that's the thing; a lot of people can only relate to people who have been inside as well. Then there's the fact that you are alone. You know I had a bad relationship with my husband, but at least it was a relationship. I did live with someone for all those years, and suddenly I was totally alone — while you are in there you are sort of safe and secure. I had my mother outside otherwise I don't know what I would have done. It leaves a mark, obviously it does■



Pat Arrowsmith was arrested when she distributed a leaflet called "Some Information For British Soldiers" at Warminster army married quarters. The leaflet, published by the British Withdrawal From Northern Ireland Campaign, gave information on the various legal and illegal ways a disaffected soldier can leave the army. She was sentenced to eighteen months imprisonment under the Incitement to Disaffection Act. She appealed against conviction and sentence, and was released on a legal technicality in early December after spending about nine months in prison. These are a selection of the poems she wrote inside.

Forbidden to take this drawing of her cell in the remand centre in Holloway prison out with her, Pat Arrowsmith smuggled it out.



### Trapped

It's not so much the heavy lukewarm food,  
the grey-fuzzed blanket, pee-stained sheets.

It's not so much the smeared and scribbled walls,  
the smelly drains, the asphalt prison yard.

It's not so much the tiny streak of sun  
leaking through the cell's cramped window-pane.

It's not so much the drab hours spent  
locked behind the massive crashed-shut door.

It's not so much the tedium of sameness  
day by day throughout the year-long stretch.

It's not so much the actual bolts and bars,  
the bossing, bellowing of brusque commands.

It's the bored voice stating: "You can't keep these cards.  
They aren't replies to letters you have written."

Or: "We've got no vases on this wing",  
when someone sends you in a bunch of flowers.

Or: "You can go to surgery tomorrow",  
when you say you've got a rash and feel faint.

Or: "You may only have six books",  
when your cousin sends you in a couple more.

Or: "The P.O. will look into that",  
when you report that all your clothes have gone.

Or: "You'll have to make a Governor's Application",  
when you want to write a letter to your lawyer.

Or: "Petition the Home Secretary about this",  
when you request an hour's fresh air each day.

Or: "That's not what my instructions were",  
when you say: "It's written in the regulations."

For here we're not just caged behind iron bars.  
We're entangled in a mesh of trivial rules,  
forced to thread a lengthy tortuous path  
through a maze of inconsistent orders.

A buck-passing bureaucracy holds sway.  
We're scolded victims of officials' whims.  
Teenagers, we badger, fret, complain,  
imprisoned in this twisted red-tape trap.



## Escape

My feet grounded on the other side.  
"I'm free to go" I said  
"I've scaled this fence,  
escaped from prison.  
No-one now can cramp me in  
or run my life.  
This at last is liberty."

It wasn't true –  
I had nothing to escape from:  
they had never managed to imprison me at all;  
I had never lost my freedom for one hour.

For when I stated: "You've no right to hold me;  
I refuse to work",  
I freed myself.

When I announced: "I won't go in that cell;  
you'll have to carry me",  
I freed myself.

When they demanded: "Who?" and "How?"  
and I declined to answer,  
I freed myself.

When I told them: "You shan't read my letters;  
I'd rather not receive them",  
I freed myself.

When I said: "Till that injustice is undone  
I don't intend to eat",  
I freed myself.

When I replied: "I don't care if you hit me;  
I won't strike you back",  
I freed myself.

And when we argued: "Prisoners too have rights;  
we'll organise a union",  
we freed ourselves.

For freedom isn't in the heart or head;  
it's in the deed,  
the choosing.

And I pray my comrades the world over,  
incarcerated, tortured, terrorised,  
may also have the power to make such choices,  
and so escape to freedom every day.

*(Written in Holloway Prison, 1974. I escaped from Askham  
Grange Prison and was on the run for two weeks.)*

## Bricked Up

Bricked up, locked in, last night I lay,  
my thoughts sterile, struggling, full of fear,  
reading the letter handed me next day.  
"I've had enough" you wrote "This is the end."

Over and over again I trod the road  
of my failures to you, unfair demands.  
After all this, by what right could  
I expect you still to want me, still to wait?

I read, re-read, couldn't switch my mind,  
till they handed me a newspaper instead.  
Five, ten, fifteen years, it said, behind  
these same brick walls – long after I had gone.

The morning when they came to set me free  
would drizzle, East wind smack my face;  
no-one there to meet me; you would be  
bricked up by then, I on my own,

worrying about you:  
were they treating you all right  
or crushing, hurting you?  
Could you sleep at night?

Then worse, much worse, I thought: next day  
no letter, newspaper – nothing at all.  
Were you ill, in hospital, gone far away  
and left me? Were you still alive?

My mind strove to get news of you,  
strained to get a message through the walls,  
know what had happened, reach out, do  
something to dispel the fear.

But another letter came days later from a friend  
of ours who thought I ought to know . . .  
I read, re-read, re-read again, and in the end  
began to comprehend – you'd died.

Then I didn't want my thoughts to shift about,  
re-living holidays in Greece and Donegal,  
country walks and Christmas dinners, evenings out;  
for all of these I'd shared with you,

but never would again. I told my mind  
to blank; thoughts to dissolve and let me sleep.  
For you were generous, warm and kind.  
I could only weep.

## Skulls

Contours on the dungeon wall catch my attention,  
fix my idle eyes,  
compel a Rorschach vision:  
up there, those sightless sockets, unlippped fangs,  
nose crater, cheek bone hollows –  
mapped by cruel brickwork,  
faintly rugged still beneath the paint's false gloss,  
brushed by twelve-watt bulb's dull gleaming –  
those hinted, extinct features form a skull.

Your skull?  
who not so long ago were suffocated in this cell,  
killed by match flame set to sheets and mattress,  
callous officers ignoring the alarm.

How many skulls are buried in this dungeon?  
Yours, victim of carelessness, brutality;  
skulls of screaming teenagers,  
stifled by months of solitary confinement,  
battering on the door to be set free;  
skulls, tortured souls of the demented,  
locked up "for their own good" (or Society's);  
skulls of mothers weeping for their children,  
dragged in here for stealing tins of pilchards;  
skulls of the weak, the feckless, inconsiderate –  
annoying jetsam gathered up and chucked in gaol.

Skulls of the wicked too who robbed the poor,  
maimed, killed for their personal advantage –  
like the robber-baron company directors  
who plunder, run our world and build these prisons;  
like our rulers who themselves commit mass murder.

And my skull?  
Shall I too leave my trace behind? –  
my ghost, mark on the wall, autograph or motto,  
that people held here later on may realise  
these dungeons in their time also contained  
those who spat in politicians' grubby faces,  
broke their vicious laws, defied injunctions,  
demanded peace and justice, shouted: No.

Yes, my skull shall also be there with the others'.  
The night before I leave I'll take a pen  
and draw my portrait, write my slogan on the brickwork.  
I too will stay here always in this dungeon.

*(Written in Holloway Prison on Prisoners For Peace Day, 1974,  
while I was in solitary confinement in the punishment cells for  
action in relation to a prisoners' union some of us tried to  
form. I was held in the cell where some months before Pat  
Cummings set her bedding on fire and died. Her bell had been  
bent back, so no officers heard when she rang it.)*



# First British Womens Liberation Cards



Centre pages left blank for your message.  
A handy list of women's centres around the country on the back.  
Printed in shades of chinese blue.

Pack of ten cards and envelopes 50p + 10p postage;  
orders over £2 (4 packs) postage free.

Send orders to Sandra Oliver,  
9 Northumberland Ave.,  
London E12 5HS.

spare **Rib**

## The Women's Movement in China

A selection of Readings, 1949 - 73  
by Elisabeth Croll  
price 60p

A complete survey of women's struggle towards equality in China from Liberation to the present time.

Orders with remittance to: Society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding,  
152 Camden High Street,  
London NW1

## COMPENDIUM

240 Camden High Street  
London NW1  
(01) 485 8944

Large selection of books on women and sexual politics.

Mail Order Service:  
Send for free list.

# BOOKS

## 'Memoirs of a Survivor'

Doris Lessing

Octagon Press £2.95

Some public spirited young lad has tried to burn the pile of rubbish in front of my building and I am reading Doris Lessing's new book, *Memoirs of a Survivor*. Consider Ludovico Vico, the 16th Century Italian historiographer. James Joyce admired his theory about the fourfold cycle of history. And Anthony Burgess, admiring James Joyce, based *A Clockwork Orange* on one of Vico's stages - the ricorso.

To clarify matters: Ludovico says, or Burgess says he said, that patterns of history develop in a continuing spiral of four stages. They are theocratic, when gods more or less walk the earth and direct the fate of men; the aristocratic, when a ruling group rules; the democratic, the masses take over and lead us all inevitably into the ricorso, or return, when everything falls apart and the cycle begins again. *A Clockwork Orange* was Burgess' version of that last stage: *Memoirs of a Survivor* is Doris Lessing's.

I should perhaps mention here that almost every culture imagines some form of this four stage cycle - the Tibetan Buddhists call the ricorso period the Kali Yuga and, you guessed it, we're in it now. In Lessing's book, described on the dust jacket as "an attempt at autobiography," we find familiar patterns. Does the ricorso always begin with rubbish piling up in the streets? How high does it have to pile before you notice it? How long does

not, to begin with, been particularly violent or harmful to the few people who had refused to leave. They even 'co-operated with the forces of law and order' as the newscasts put it. Then, as food became more scarce, and whatever the danger was that had first set populations on the move away from it came closer, the gangs became dangerous, and when they passed through the suburbs of our city, people ran inside and stayed out of their way.

And where is the way out of this encroaching barbarism? There is only one way. A new vision of reality must emerge - a new form for social and human relationships. I am reminded of another period in history - the late 13th, early 14th Century - Piers Plowman, *The Romance of the Rose*, *The Pearl*. Each of these works is visionary and opens with a narrator who falls asleep and dreams of a new reality - a more real reality. This slumber is not an escape out of the world of trouble. It is far more exciting, far more relevant to us who have experimented with drugs, who have recorded our dreams, who have watched Uri Geller bend forks on tv and wondered how stable the material world is after all. For it is the world of the dreamer which turns out to be the authentic world, and which provides the key, the clue to the meaning of the ordinary non-dreaming experience.

What happens is that Lessing's narrator moves through her living room wall into what might be called "another reality plane."

"One morning I stood with my after-breakfast cigarette - I allowed myself this one real cigarette a day - and through clouds of blue coiling smoke looked at how the yellowness of the sun stretched in a foreshortened oblong, making the wall itself seem higher in the middle than



Anne Severson

the pile remain before you realize it will never be collected?

Burgess' book, unlike the movie, had no hero to identify with, no villains to take responsibility for the collapse of society. His fictional solution was equal in violence to the problem. Lessing, at least, envisions, and that is the precise word, a way out. But first you should have some sense of her version of collapse - her narrator, an elderly woman, watches the world change from the window of her ground floor flat:

There was no single reason for people leaving. We knew that all public services had stopped to the south and to the east, and that this state of affairs was spreading our way. We knew that everyone had left that part of the country, except for bands of people, mostly youngsters, who lived on what they could find: crops left ungathered in the fields, animals that had escaped slaughter before everything had broken down. These bands, or gangs, had

at its ends. I looked at the glow and the pulse of the yellow, looked as if I were listening, thinking how, as the seasons changed, so did the shape and extent and position of this patch of morning light - and then I was through the wall and I knew what was there. I did not at that first time achieve much more than that there were a set of rooms. The rooms were disused, had been for some time. Years, perhaps. There was no furniture, paint had flaked off the wall in places, and lay in tiny shards on the floorboards with scraps of paper and dead flies and dust. I did not go in, but stood there on the margin between the two worlds, my familiar flat and these rooms which had been quietly waiting there all this time."

If her solution seems impractical to you consider it a fable or a magical tale and read on. Lessing is more than a visionary. She is an enormously skilled novelist who uses this frame-work of disaster to develop a complex essay on love. Her elderly

heroine - the wise old woman of myth? - watches over a child and the child's beast, a mysterious presence, half cat and half dog. As this child develops into a beautiful and world worn woman of sixteen, the narrator observes her struggle with the once taken for granted modes of love - love between friend and friend, between man and woman, adult and child, human and animal:

"I think that all this time, human beings have been watched by creatures whose perceptions and understanding have been so far in advance of anything we have been able to accept because of our vanity, that we would be appalled if we were able to know, would be humiliated. We have been living with them as blundering, blind, callous, cruel murderers and torturers, and they have watched and known us."

The questions that inevitably arise, that are beginning, in fact, to appear in our daily papers - what caused it all to go wrong, and how can we get out of it - can't be answered on the ordinary side of the reality wall. The solution, the answers, and finally, the new cycle, all exist on the other side.

For me there is a crucial judgment to be made about any book; will it change my life? And, if so, in what way? I first read *A Clockwork Orange* while driving across the California desert in 1966. The book enraged me. I threw it out the car window. I had no quarrel with Burgess as a writer, in fact, the sheer force of his bravura style was partially responsible for my anger. It worked. He convinced me that his vision was accurate, and I reacted predictably - or, at least, as he predicted humans would react to disturbing news - with violence. (I quickly bought another copy to loan to friends.)

Lessing's book certainly has a different effect on me. I look at the rubbish in a different way. Part of me is glad to see it piling up - surely "they" will begin to see what "we" have been saying for so long. Lessing, by the way, presents a tight little analysis of the breakdown of society in terms of the transformation of "they" into a terrifying and even more anonymous "it" that creeps ever closer.

But another part of me mourns the passing of the old and tries to prepare - intelligently? creatively? for what is coming. I continue to record my dreams. I read books on astral projection. I learn to compost. I study healing. I start to shape my dreams. This begins to shape my life. I watch the wall.

Anna Severson

## Yonnondio: From the Thirties.

Tillie Olsen  
Faber £2.95.

If you've read Tillie Olsen's collection of stories, *Tell Me A Riddle* (1961) or have seen her story 'I Stand Here Ironing' in feminist anthologies, you'll be fascinated by *Yonnondio*. It's a brilliant engrossing fragment of a novel written by her in the thirties, lost, found and recently reconstructed by the author. Completed, it might have stood as the feminist rival to Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*.

With the current nostalgia for all things thirties, this book provides a vivid counter-image of women's life beyond the Garbo-Dietrich-Harlow screen stereotypes. It's the story of a woman in a working-class family struggling to survive the worst years of the American De-



pression. The narrative charts their move from a Mid-West mining village, through tenant farming in South Dakota, to life in the stockyard slums. The blurb on the jacket claims that Tillie Olsen has "created one of the most sympathetic and believable women in American fiction" and for once the blurb-writer is right. Anna Holbrook is the mother of four kids, engaged in an unending struggle against dirt and poverty, unwanted pregnancies, and her own and her family's brutalisation. The conditions of her life are vigorously and movingly described: the cooking, mending and cleaning, the noisy, demanding kids "puffed out with starch", the cardboard tacked to the floor instead of carpets, the backlog of chores after illness - "potato peels turning black in the sink, the dirty dishes, the the souring bottle of milk about which flies droned".

The connections between the larger economic situation and the Holbrook family life are clearly made. When Jim Holbrook, overworked, underpaid, threatened with redundancy, withdraws into whiskey and vents his frustration on his wife and children.

Anna too became bitter and brutal. If one of the kids was in her way, if they did not obey her instantly, she would hit at them in a blind range, as if it were some devil she was exorcising. Afterwards, in the midst of her work, regret would cramp her heart...

Yet beside the picture of brutality and suffering in the home, Olsen also shows the moments of solidarity and generosity which make up working-class family life. She uses cross-cutting techniques to dramatise the family's experience, switching from six and a half year old Mazie's view of school, the streets, changing the baby, to the father's fight against short-time at work, and back to the mother's stream of memory and desire at the wash-tub. The

everyday clash of needs and moods is presented with enormous sympathy and observation. The range of sympathy is one of the strongest features of the novel, that and the view of the woman and her family actively in struggle. Despite the harshness of the forces ranged against them, Tillie Olsen's characters are never shown as merely passive victims of the system. They all have their possibilities and perceptions which push back the restrictions of their lives. Thus the child Mazie's attempt to find words to appreciate the prairie sky, Jim Holbrook's effort to organise on the job, or Anna's momentary liberation from motherhood - "the mother alertness" - to a separate sense of herself, singing in a dusty field on a hot summer's day.

Some people may find the novel's 'poetic' language difficult to take. It's true that the imagery is almost too rich, too evocative, and that in *Yonnondio* Olsen hasn't yet achieved the control, the mastery of form that there is in the short-stories of *Tell Me a Riddle*. But there's absolutely no doubt, in my mind at least, that the attempt to write about people's experience in this way is worth dozens of the glossy trivial novels which claim to be about women and the family.

Jean Radford

## Kid's Books

Hal  
Jean MacGibbon  
Heinemann £2.10

This is Jean MacGibbon's second story about urban children and centred around a strong female character. Hal, or Halle-lujah as the West Indian heroine of *Hal* is really called and her contemporaries attend the local comprehensive school and spend their spare time playing on overgrown wasteland in the middle of a residential area. They invent an elaborate 'game'; a glorified hide-and-seek which frequently ends with a couple alone in the bushes. Jean MacGibbon makes it clear that the game has semi-conscious sexual overtones but is discreet in her handling, conveying to the reader the children's own slightly ambiguous attitude to these encounters. From an upstairs window in a dilapidated house overlooking the site a pale boy watches the 'game'. Like the rest he is half aware of its sexual overtones, but basically he is captivated by Hal's personality and her mastery over the other members of the gang, both male and female. Gradually he overcomes his shyness, leaves his room and joins the group. Initially *Hal* is the story of Barry, his feigned illness, loneliness, relationship with his busy unsympathetic mother, but the story shifts to the gang's attempt to turn the site into an adventure playground and their final hopeless battle against the developers. But *Hal* is much more than an adventure story of innocent children fighting wicked developers. The children's school, their relationship with their teachers play a vital part. In her description of the end of term entertainment Jean MacGibbon shows a comprehensive school actually making use of the children's racial heritage instead of denying it. In the way she des-

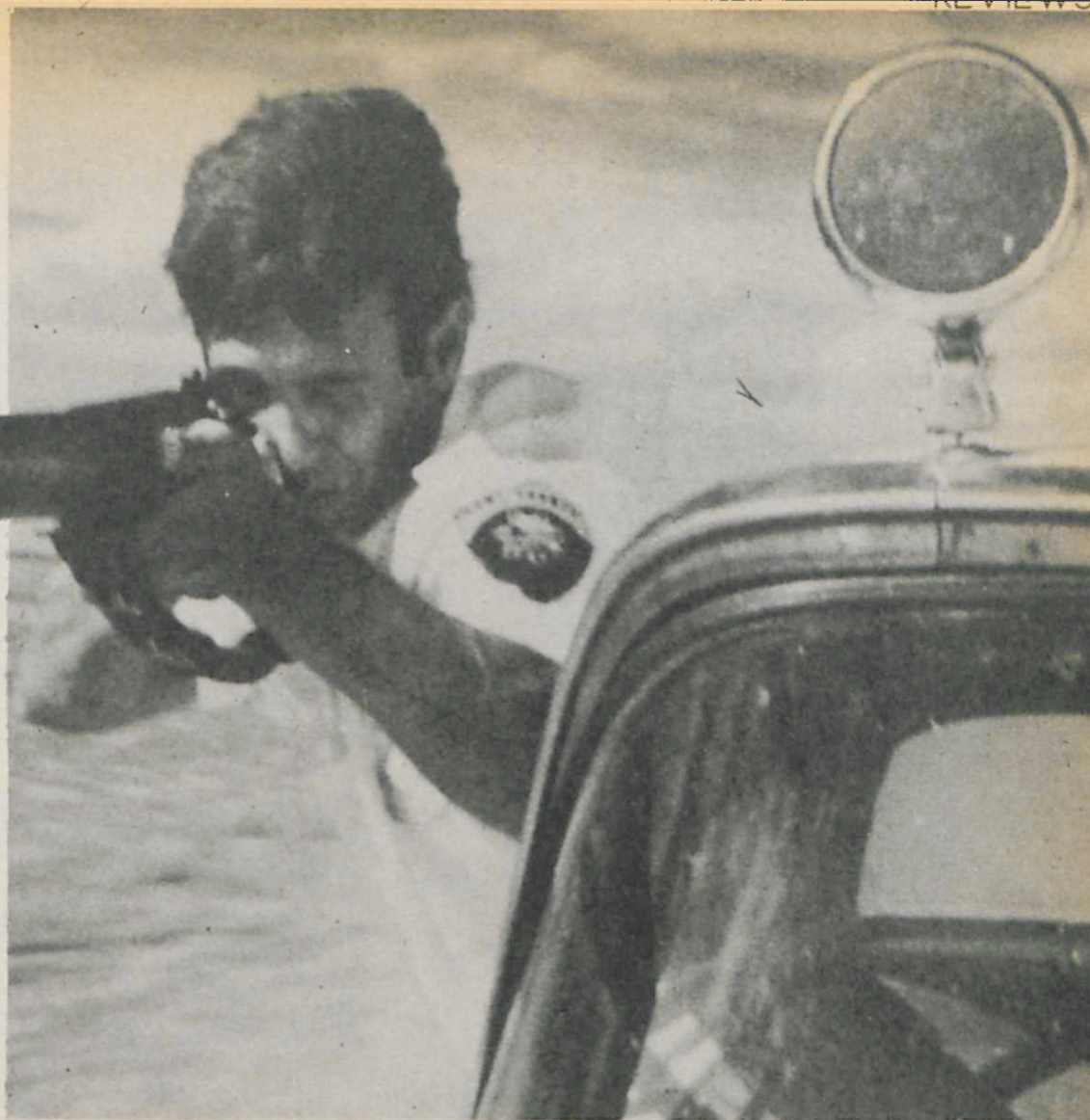


cribes home life Jean MacGibbon makes it clear that these cultural differences should be preserved. The Greek family, and Hal's own family both seem preferable to Barry's limited and lonely existence.

For once in a children's book it is no advantage to be white, or to be male. Without being didactic or patronising Jean MacGibbon has written an excellent story of the emotional and practical problems facing urban children.

a member of CISSY

**FILM**



### Do-it-yourself DIVORCE from £12

Written in lay terms "Divorce Without a Solicitor" tells you all you need to know about current laws and procedures in England and Wales. Indexed for easy reference, the 130 pages contain all necessary forms and guidance. Can easily save its cost a dozen times. Send £3 (incl. of p&p) to

Millstream Publications  
(SR) Ltd.,  
Mill Lane, Burley,  
Ringwood, Hants.



# Theatre

**King Lear, adapted and directed by Buzz Goodbody, performed for a short season at The Place in London.**

Buzz Goodbody's shortened version of *King Lear* was guided by practical considerations: the need to provide an accessible production of an A-level text for Midlands students, which would end in time for them to catch the last transport home.

Its brief season before Christmas at The Place was an impressive example of Shakespearian clarification and interpretation. With virtually no permanent 'set', the sculptural impact was gained by using different areas of the auditorium during the production, and concentrating on costumes and small incidental props to illustrate the theme of splendid decadence in the throes of disintegration.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of this production was the way in which, while not obscuring the conventionally taught 'themes' of old age/youth, man/nature, madness, it also brought out strongly the underlying movement on which the other thematic concerns are built. This is the way in which people's status and self-image in that medieval society was determined by their status as property owners. The play is a sweeping elaboration of the process and effect of change from one form of ownership to another (Lear's kingly monopoly changing to the more dispersed ownership of a new aristocracy) and the greed and violence as the property is fought over by Lear's daughter Goneril and Regan, and Edmund, the bastard son of the Duke of Gloucester. The parallel plots of the Lear and Gloucester families show how in both cases to be without property is to be naked and mad, the state of propertylessness feared by the propertied prompts the predatory sexual greed of Goneril and Regan, with a Laingian familial violence. The two sisters' plotting alliance becomes fierce competition when they fight over Edmund, and in these two sisters the violent sexual symbolism is closely bound up with real material greed.

The play treats both sides of the struggle - the greed for property and the victimisation of the dispossessed; as Lear finds, in a world of cut-throat families it is useless to talk of a natural order. The future is contained within Edgar, one who has himself fought off nakedness and madness, and his last couplet in the play takes on a historical emphasis which refers to the ending of one era and the beginning of another:

The oldest hath borne most, we that are young,  
Shall never see so much, nor live so long.

In this production, the three 'outsiders', Kent, the Fool and Cordelia act as pointers and echoes to the progression of misfortune. Cordelia (the character, not the actress) is a pain, as she has been in every production I've seen since my first school play in which I played Goneril. In her share of sexual symbolism she is purity and martyrdom. Kent looks after the king in his agony, Edgar fights for his breakthrough, the Fool utters his fierce

perceptions, but Cordelia is the embodiment of Lear's comment that 'Nothing will come of nothing.' Obviously this is Shakespeare's fault, not Buzz Goodbody's; I doubt whether anything else could be made of Cordelia, given her symbolic function in the play.

The RSC made a point of having a brief discussion after the play, which works more to demystify the sacredness of the actor-audience relationship than to discuss the play throughly - the play still takes over two and a half hours.

The production is touring the United States for six weeks this spring, after which a similar production of 'Hamlet', also adapted and directed by Buzz Goodbody opens at Stratford. It is to be hoped that the RSC's Arts Council subsidy is not so curtailed that their second auditorium in London has to be scrapped. Although this year's choice of plays at The Place hasn't been particularly exciting, *Lear* was an outstanding piece of work. It would be disastrous if *Hamlet* did not follow it to London.

Micheline Wandor

## Kennedy's Children

*Kennedy's Children*, by Robert Patrick is a celebration of an era. Five unrelated characters sit in a New York bar. All have lived through the sixties, and are now re-living them. There is no dialogue, just a series of soliloquies spoken in turn, but woven together by themes. The sixties are seen by them all as a time of energy. "I used to be active," says the played-out hippy girl, "the whole sixties." Idealism has now given way to cynicism; acid has turned to heroin. The underground actor has learned that all that energy was just speed. The soldier who tried to find beauty and meaning in Vietnam stumbles into paradox and confusion. Sexual freedom has lapsed into impotence; men are gay, and women are alone. Kennedy's death, Marilyn Monroe's death, marked the beginning of a decade. *Kennedy's Children* heralds its end. It is a play of sterility, the lack of action and the static non-communication reflecting the emptiness of the seventies, now that we've all come down.

*Kennedy's Children* is running at the King's Head theatre until the end of March. It is directed by Clive Donner, with Shirley Ann Field, Don Parker, Deborah Norton, Pat Star and Richard Oldfield.

Sally Feldman

## FREE PREGNANCY TESTS

Also Advice on Abortion,  
Full Fertility Control, and  
Vasectomy. British Pregnancy  
Advisory Service is a  
non-profit making registered  
charitable trust. Tel:  
Birmingham (021) 643 1461  
Brighton (0273) 509726  
Leeds (0532) 443861  
Liverpool (051) 227 3721  
Manchester (061) 236 7777

BPAS

## LADY JUNE'S LINGUISTIC LEPROSY



A new star is rising in the galaxy. Lady June's new album, *Linguistic Leprosy*, is a fascinating collage of poetry and fine music, of humour and penetrating insight. Lady June is first and foremost a poetess whose words belie a panoramic experience of the world. Lady June, former model, painter, sculptress and cowpuncher, now rides hellbent for leather into the world of recording.

CAROLINE RECORDS  
C1509 £1.46

Produced by Kevin Ayers

## TOPIC

The label for folk music



Frankie  
Armstrong  
*Lovely On The Water*

FRANKIE ARMSTRONG  
LOVELY ON THE WATER  
12TS216

The TOPIC catalogue of traditional folk music also includes Shirley Collins' "Adieu to Old England" (12TS238), a Melody Maker Folk Record of the Year, 1974, and "The Sweet Primroses" (12T170); Anne Briggs' album (12T207); Scots traditional singers Jeannie Robertson (12T96), Isabel Sutherland (12T151) and Lizzie Higgins (12T185); American ballad-singer Hedy West (12T117, 146, 163); as well as LaRena Clark, Sarah Ogan Gunning, Sarah Makem, Phoebe Smith & Peta Webb.

Write for our free catalogue of over 130 records: TOPIC RECORDS (Dept S), 27 Nassington Rd., London NW3 2TX.



an  
investigation  
by a  
womans  
liberation group

# HOMEWORKERS

The last time there was a widespread public outcry over the pay and conditions of homeworkers was between the 1880s and the First World War. This is the beginning of a recent study by the LQW Pay Unit in London into the situation of homeworkers today. Their report was published at the very end of 1974 and aroused some publicity. But in general little attention is paid to this twilight area of work done almost entirely by housebound women — wives, mothers, old age pensioners and disabled women.

Some official publications have included homeworkers in their reports. The Commission on Industrial Relations in 1973, 1974 and the Prices and Incomes Board report of 1969. In 1972 the Liberal Party's *Action on Hardship campaign* improved the rates of pay for lace homeworkers in Nottingham.

Homeworkers don't know about the Wages Councils which have set down the minimum rates of pay they should be getting. Their isolation presents a problem to trade unions, who are the very people supposed to represent the homeworkers on Wages Councils. There are no national statistics of the total numbers of homeworkers in Britain because, as casual labourers, they don't pay national insurance contributions. However, a survey carried out in 1968 estimates that there are at least a quarter of a million persons engaged in homework.

In 1972 a Women's Liberation group in North London carried out 23 interviews with women homeworkers. The following report is based on their interviews. We have to conceal the actual location and real names of the homeworkers who are fearful of losing their jobs if their identity was known.

We found eleven women out of eighteen we talked to doing homework are under 40-years-old and, with two exceptions, they are all married and living with their husbands. Nine of these women have three or more children. There are no one-parent families in our sample. Most of the homework is done in cramped conditions which adds to the difficulties and discomfort. Mrs

Paul, a Nigerian, lives in a two-roomed flat with four children and works at the machine making linings for men's ties with her youngest child on her lap.

The care of children was a frequent reason given for working at home. The majority of the homeworkers regard the family and housework as their main work, and homework is therefore fitted around the children and domestic chores. Mrs Amor, when interviewed at 3.30 in the afternoon, was in the middle of cooking dinner for her husband and children. Mrs B., a Spanish woman, said she only works about two hours a day as she is occupied in keeping her house trim and has to cook her husband's lunch every day. Mrs E. likewise cooks a mid-day lunch for her two children, whom she fetched to and from school. Six of the women interviewed said that their husbands might help them with the homework or other work around the house. Jean machines pillow-ticks, 'After the ticks have been machined, they have to be turned inside out, the corners poked out, then packed and labelled with my name in case of complaint. The factory test the ticks by blowing air through them. This work is always done by my husband in the evenings and takes a considerable time. But there's always so much to do, you know what I mean, but he does help sometimes. If I'm not feeling well, he'll put the children to bed or do the washing up, but nothing regular. But there's always something wrong with the kids, Sharon has got bronchitis and Patrick just sprained his ankle and I took him up to the hospital. The number of times I've been there. Last time Marian split her head right open...' Another woman who is a skilled machinist said she would have preferred to make dresses rather than cushion covers but she could not take it on although it meant more pay because of the lack of space and her children would 'spoil the garments'.

Cultural differences are of some significance in attitudes towards homework. One Spanish woman stressed she works only for pleasure 'as I do not go to the park or go out very much'. Her husband was very

suspicious of the interviewer, saying that she must be aware that some people were not supposed to work at home. Mrs F., an English woman married to a Greek Cypriot, told us that women from the continent, including Greek and Irish women, don't expect their husbands to support them and that the mother is the person responsible for seeing the children have clothes and shoes. She added that she'd heard it said our survey group had come to take the work away from the Cypriot women to give it to the English. Mrs P. from Nigeria said she worked mainly because she cannot bear to be completely dependent on her husband and it is against her heart and her religion to live off the government. At the same time she feels exploited. One ex-homeworker aged 75 said, 'In the East End they do a lot of hand work. They're mostly Jewish gvnors not like the Greek ones here, but they employ only their own girls. You've got to be in the know. There are a lot of invalid mothers who do it, old people and mothers who have to be at home to get their children's dinner ready.'

Most of the homeworkers we spoke to do machine sewing of either clothing or cushions. Rates of pay range from 12½ pence for a simple dress up to 40 pence for more elaborate ones, 25 pence for hot pants and dress, 20 pence for hot pants with bib and straps. 'It makes you mad when you see how much they go for in the shops' (Mrs F.). The cushion makers are paid, on average, 2½ pence per cushion, including putting in the zip. Most of the machinists buy their own industrial sewing machine, which cost between £80 and £104 in 1972, and also pay for their own cotton and needles.

Others do a variety of different jobs. One homeworker glues material onto belts in a two-part process which takes her from ten to fifteen minutes per belt. In 1972 she was paid 8½ pence per dozen — the same rate of pay as in 1960 when she first started. From 1971 to mid-1972 Ellie did the same homework as her mother, threading metal buttons and buckles onto wire frames preparatory to the dipping process. Her



average pace of work was three frames an evening, working from seven to eleven o'clock five days a week, helped by her husband and sometimes by the children. Her average weekly earnings were £3. The work was dirty because the metal buttons were still wet and stained her hands. The shavings from them fell onto the floor and got into her finger nails. Every time the children wanted some food or drink she had to wash her hands first.

Mrs O. makes button holes on women's jackets by hand, although she could machine them if she could afford a machine. She can do seven button holes in an hour and is paid 12½ pence for the long jackets which have ten buttonholes and 9 pence for the short jackets. Mrs P. machines the lining onto the fabric of men's ties and can do about two dozen of these an hour. She is paid 22½ pence per dozen. Mrs D. is a fast and skilled worker and pastes 1,000 tissue papers an hour onto photo albums, for which she is paid at a piece rate of £1 per 1,000 pages. Her weekly earnings working two hours a day were between £10 and £12.

But in general the weekly income from homeworking was low. Out of the sixteen women for whom we have data, eleven have weekly earnings below £7.50 (1972), with nine of these earning under £5 per week. Most of the homeworkers can say how much they earn a week, and what the piece rate is, but they are in general vague about how much time they work each day or week. To the women, the amount of money they earn each week is significant and important, and they do not count the number of hours, the discomfort nor the exhaustion. They are often, however, aware

that the rates of pay are low and know that factory rates are better. Mrs P. said that she would do factory work if she didn't have children to look after while Ellie's husband, commenting on her pay of 5 pence per 1,000 labels attached to coats and dresses in 1965 said, 'She used to pay her employer for the privilege of working.'

Homework is unreliable employment. Mrs F. sews dresses and would not name her employer. She says you get work regularly if you work for the same firm consistently, 'but they can only give you what they have.' She had more work some weeks than others. She was given a bundle of ten or nineteen garments to do in three or four days and might have to be up all night to finish the work within the time limit. Delivery of homework is mostly done by the firm. When not, the women pay their own fares for collecting work. One Cypriot woman did not know where the firm was. Her husband took the finished work to the factory and collected a fresh load for her.

All the women we interviewed worked to supplement the family income, usually to buy essential food and children's clothing. In one case, the earnings helped pay off the mortgage, 'Or the house would be sold over our heads.' Since her husband was near retiring age he had no chance of earning more money to pay the mortgage off himself. In another case the money went to redecorate the house and pay off debts. It is clear that, however vital the homeworker's wages are to the family income, they can never provide more than a supplementary addition, whether the primary income is from the husband's employment, social security or from an old age pension. The rates of pay are too low to

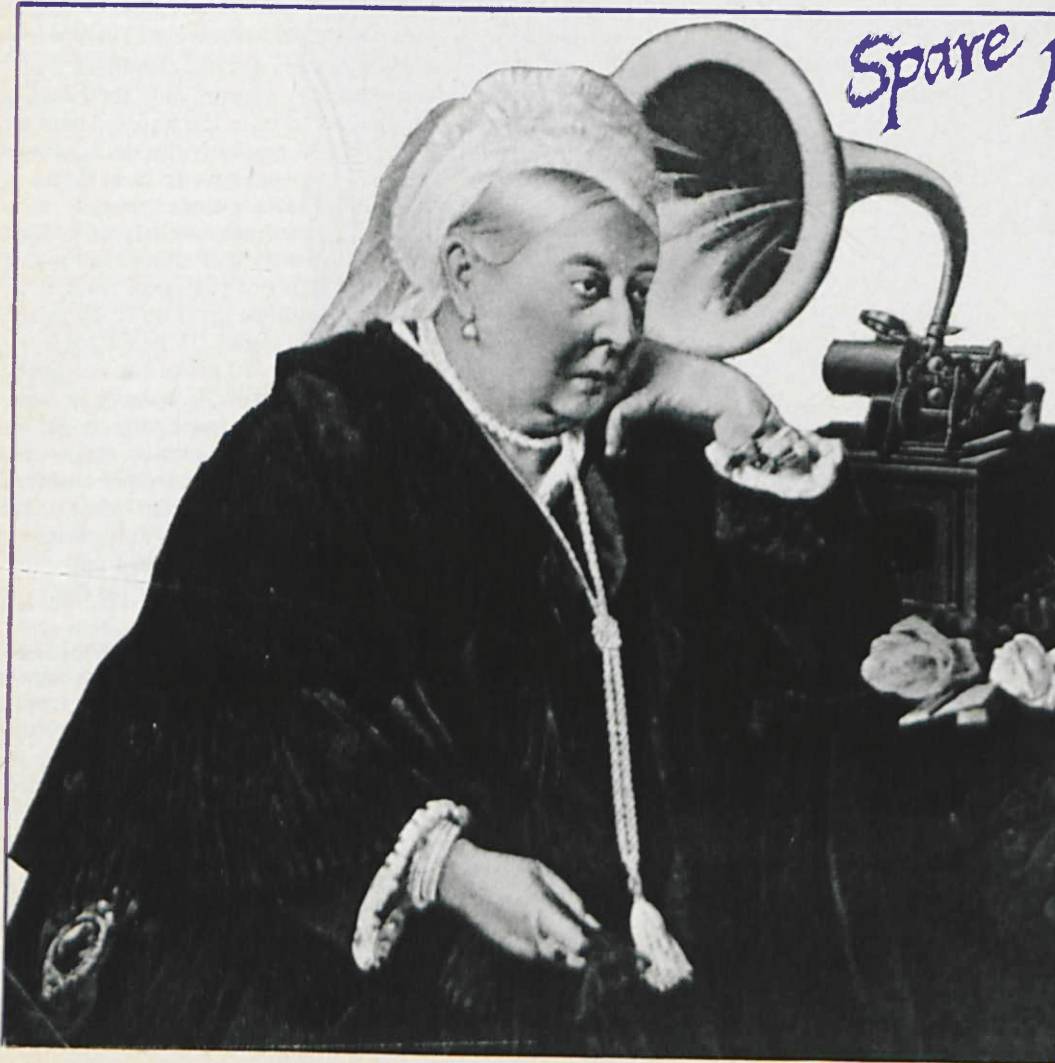
allow them to make a living wage. The comments of the Low Pay Unit were that employers, knowing that anyone on supplementary benefit is only allowed to earn £2 a week, geared a full week's work to this amount. Well aware of the vulnerability of this group, the firms ruthlessly exploited the homeworkers.

None of the homeworkers we interviewed received sickness benefits, accident insurance, pension schemes or paid holidays. Nor are they compensated for overheads, such as machine repairs, electricity or heating. None had heard of the Wages Councils. They do not know what the minimum rate for the job should be and they are untouched by the Trade Unions. As Ellie said, when she gave up homework, 'Homework's not bad but it's too messy and the pay is terrible. I prefer to work in company.' She thinks there should be better pay if homework is to continue and there should be contact with the employers. 'It should be abolished or the pay and conditions should be improved.'

Written up by Anne de Winter, Emily Hope and Mary Kennedy.

*The Trades Union Congress has recently made recommendations to improve the pay and conditions of homeworkers. They propose 'that homeworkers should be paid more than employees who work in a factory, and that both wages councils and local authorities should step up their investigations, and make their information public and available to trade unions.*

(The full report of this study will be published in *Explorations in Sociology*, Vol. 6 B, Pub: Tavistock 1975.)



# Spare Rib BOP

ST. PANCRAS  
TOWN HALL  
EUSTON ROAD  
LONDON NW1

FRIDAY  
MARCH 14  
8.00 PM

LIVE  
BANDS

£1



Perhaps our voice is one road which could lead us back to our centre. Strength to cope with situations, a more complete sense of self, to be able to be honest with ourselves and face our reality, all seems to hinge on staying in touch with some sort of energy inside us. As women, we share the difficulty, frustration and fear of expressing ourselves emotionally, creatively, verbally and physically. Perhaps a way in and a way out of our long-contained feelings is through our sound. We never really get to know ourselves or our potential because we worry what others think. We swallow back our expression so that mental or physical illness is just one manifestation of our oppressed selves.

Marion Fudger

# frankie armstrong

**f**rankie Armstrong has made a positive connection between singing and being involved in the women's movement. Though she writes songs herself, she mainly concentrates on seeking out traditional folk songs, drawing comparisons with women's experience now. As well as discovering these vital links, she is looking more closely at sound and how it relates to women.

She sings mostly unaccompanied, often at feminist events or folk clubs. Just now she's singing with a Women's Theatre Group production *My Mother Says I Never Should* ... (see next issue).

She has chosen not to be a professional singer, believing her experience of social work in drug treatment, and more recently her study of group therapy, essential to her

output through song.

She started singing with a skiffle group in 1956 and a few years later, via her relationship with professional folk singer Louis Killen, began making traditional British folk material. After working together for some time, clubs began inviting her back alone. Killen's reputation putting her in the fortunate position of never having to look for work.

Since then, despite gradually losing her sight, Frankie has become increasingly involved in her work and her singing, particularly here and in America. She has made a solo EP and appeared on several others\* including a feminist album project with women members of the Critics Group, back in 1967.

\* See discography.



"The emphasis in traditional folk music is on the words rather than the sound, whereas with rock or pop music, the emphasis is on the sound, and the song is secondary. Most of the pages in the music press are dedicated to rock. Folk is treated as a minority interest. Those who've tried to bridge that gap are now on the pop pages, the Sandy Dennys, the Fairports and the Steeleye Spans, they no longer appear on the folk page.

• If people see the possibility of making large sums of money out of it, either as promoters, agents or performers, then in a sense they go onto the pop scene – even if, like Steeleye Span, they stay doing mainly folk type stuff, with an uncomfortable foot in either camp. Predominantly the money is made out of the pop machinery. That is capitalism. Folk will never have that mass appeal, it will never be plugged that much, it will never become a saleable commodity in the quantity that makes the kind of money that record companies are interested in.

I think a lot of folk music is very boring, and frankly I'd rather not listen to the rather twee, pretty but not very profound or well sung ditties about drinking ale or milkmaids. I don't want to put down all those kind of songs because there are some superb ones. But that's the bulk of the repertoire in some clubs and it's equated with the golden rural age, a kind of primitive anarchism, 'If we could all leap around the maypole, wouldn't it be lovely' type things. It frightens me, that unthinking part of the folk revival.

They're nice people and on one level, they're there in the folk clubs for the right reasons: the camaraderie, the face to face interaction, the non-alienation, the breaking down of performer/audience barriers. But I think if they're not very careful, there's a real danger that the whole thing may very subtly be moved over into a reactionary, nationalistic movement and taken on as a wing of that. Well, it depends on the economic climate and all sorts of things, but what frightens me is that it could become popular for the wrong reasons.

There's so small an area in music that is, by definition, untainted by all those contradictions of exploitation. I feel aware of them, but on the other hand, I don't feel bad about taking ten or fifteen quid for a night's performance, into which I've put a lot of thought, a lot of work, and I may have had to travel a long way to do it. The process of charging people an entrance fee on a non-profit making basis comes nearest within a money economy to being able to bring some kind of expertise to people. I have some ability to put over certain kinds of songs in a way that I know to be powerful because of the number of people who've come back and said they made some connections between it and their life or politics.

I don't write that much. The bulk of my repertoire is traditional material still. I'm increasingly going to ballads, also industrial material, but I've not found much women's industrial material. I also do humorous material and a few of the more orthodox lyrical love songs that I've found particularly moving – but less and less now because they're not saying what I want to say at this point in time.

It depends on how much time I have to

introduce things. This was one of the lovely things in the States. I often had a lot of time in places, so I could really talk and put a song in context. There's some songs I wouldn't do if I couldn't say, 'Well look, this song is to do with the role of women in society, the way that they were used in relation to their parents, the way jealousies were created. Or the way men were always being sent off to war and women had to stay behind with no means of livelihood.' There's so many things that you can explain and put into historical context. I feel strongly that I want to say something about me and the history that I feel the songs come from.

Using traditional material, I'm trying to make the connections between me as a woman now and, say, a woman in the sixteenth century, who was literally beaten to death because she chose a servant to marry. They are true stories. There's lots of evidence of women being literally done in by their families. I don't want to do a great imposed self-exposure thing. I just want to be straight and clear about why I'm singing a particular song, which may appear to be just a superb song from the sixteen hundreds but it actually does have something to say to us now. There's another song I sing, there's a lot of ballads about this, where a daughter falls pregnant by a servant and she tells father that she won't marry dukes or lords, she's going to marry the servant boy. So he has the servant boy suffocated. I sang that a couple of weeks ago at a Women's Aid thing and a middle-aged man came up to me afterwards and told me that he'd just understood this feeling he'd always had. It was exactly what his wife's parents wanted to do to him but they didn't have the power, they wanted to snuff him out.

So if people can make those connections between a four hundred year old ballad and their lives today, then that's the business I'm in. I'd be very sad if those songs died. They handle subjects which no modern songs handle: infanticide, incest, murder between families out of jealousy and rage, regret, remorse, guilt. Dory Previn is someone who's trying to do it."

*"It's a difficult thing that you've tried to do with the Women's Theatre Group. To try and combine your form of music with a play that's aimed at thirteen to seventeen year olds. It's very different from the music they're used to."*

"I joined the group after it had started on this project. They were really facing the problem of trying to present something that was going to be valid for thirteen to seventeen year old girls, without reinforcing all the stereotypes and conditioning that had already gone on – but still something they could identify with. It was strongly felt by the group that the songs could make broader personal and political points, connecting up the scenes with some of the wider issues, which would then be implicit within the scene.

One person said that maybe the songs should have guitar accompaniment. All I can say is hypothetically maybe you wouldn't have listened in quite the same way if there was chunk, chunk on the guitar. Your mind slips into a different gear. In some ways it would be fair enough to do it in the medium that the kids are used to

listening to, but on the other hand they aren't used to listening to the songs, they're used to hearing the sound. So how much do you compromise to make it acceptable? Do you lose some of what you're trying to say?"

*"You said earlier that you don't have much time to do some of the things you'd like. What is your time committed to, mainly?"*

"I sing in folk clubs and around women's centres and I go to a course on self-directed group studies. It's run by politically motivated people at the North London Polytechnic. It's structured for the first term, with training groups, counselling groups, encounter groups and some body work. After that it's up to you what you do – at least in theory it is. We're in the middle of a great hoo-haa because we set up a women's group and most of the women on the course have joined, so the rest of the people have got a bit uptight!

I'm trained as a social worker, that's the job I've done most of my life. I've always worked or studied as well as sung. I can't say that one is the main thing and the other is subsidiary. I see relatively few singers who keep themselves as a channel for all these other things. It becomes too airified and they get involved in the details. That's why I don't want to give up one or the other, it's just a problem in terms of time and energy. I couldn't sing without being rooted in other issues.

Also, if I'm singing well then it's just stunning, some of the feedback that I get. And I need that, I couldn't go on without it. That's what is so exciting, knowing what I can achieve and knowing there is the potential within everybody. The songs can be something of a trigger, to open somebody's gut up, if you like. There is the danger, though, of the politics outweighing the art. I don't think that the kind of stuff which tells you what to think, works. It alienates. In its content, it may be saying something different from the national press, but in its form, it's still using those kinds of assumptions about people, that they need to be told what to think."

*"If people don't have some form of outlet, then there is an awful lot inside which will never be clarified. It's actually putting it out there. Women have been denied this outlet, this channel. If only there was some way of encouraging more women to open up this channel, not only to themselves but to each other."*

"I know what's happened to me as a result of it. It's a two way process: when I was actually able to get that sound, I was ready to get it; but on the other hand getting it also helped to centre me.

A friend of mine, Ethel Raim, writes about folk music and is a singer and collector of music from Eastern Europe. She's very interested in women's music and has set up sound workshops in the States to teach not only vast groups of people but also several smaller groups. I've seen her do incredible things with workshops of a hundred people, of whom forty or fifty would be desperately shy of singing in public. They would say 'I can't sing, I can't hold a note' and by the end of an hour or so, Ethel would have them singing a two part song. In tune and sounding good.



She uses a technique which I'd like to use. It's not singing lessons per se. It's this process of starting to get in touch with that tougher centred voice. She gets people to start yelling – hey! (*Not easily transcribed onto paper.*) Then to pitch it high or low, and then she gets different halves of the group to hold different notes as long as they can whilst she sings a top line against the drone. It's phenomenal to watch her work. I've been in some of her small groups which are just women only and it's quite amazing. Women find it so difficult to yell, to completely let go from right inside. It puts you in touch with your whole self, your breathing mechanism. You just feel so good when you let everything out.

So it's not orthodox singing lessons I'm interested in, but in getting people in touch with where and how it is that they can use that much stronger, expressive vocal quality.

"I can't commit myself at this stage to an ongoing group because I'm starting another job soon – I've got to live. But if we just set up one workshop to see what comes from it – of course you make an enormous noise once you start freeing your voice. But I just saw what happened to some of these women. Some had really found that voice for themselves; every so

often others would kind of swallow it back, just like you swallow back your feelings. Something in them – their conditioning – was saying, 'No, I can't be that outgoing, I can't let rip, I can't afford to make that much noise.' Ethel would just keep encouraging them, she never put anyone down. She'd use anything that happened, and incorporate it.

I haven't got a great voice, it's partly just work and practice. I always liked singing as a kid, in school choirs or whatever. I can still sing amazingly out of key, though, if I'm not watching what I'm doing. Obviously people start off at different points of confidence and capacity to hear and connect that with the voice and breathing. I know lots of people who have better voices than me but have much less impact because they're stuck in a strange idea of what the voice is about.

I've listened to music collected by friends of mine from obscure villages in parts of Eastern Europe and everybody sings. Maybe it'll be a harvest celebration or a wedding and there's a total blend of voices. Within the community they will have some people who are considered to be the singer/storytellers, the ritual song performers. But everybody else will also

sing and in tune. The women's voices especially have this beautiful strength and it's obviously because they are expected to.

There's all kinds of theories. I don't know much about John Lomax's theories but he has said that the folk music of a culture is largely dependent on the women – the actual sound of the folk music, where it's made in the voice. He claims that it's dependent on the role of women: how repressed they are, how much they are stuck together with the children, how much they sing to the children or to themselves. How much room they have for self-expression.

It's good to know there are people thinking around these areas."

#### Discography:

*Frankie Armstrong* (Topic 12TS 216)  
*The Bird In The Bush* (Topic 12T 135) with A.L. Lloyd and Anne Briggs  
*The Valiant Sailor* (Topic 12TS 232) with Roy Harris, A.L. Lloyd and Martin Wyndham-Read  
*The Female Frolic* (Argo ZDA 82) with women Critics Group members, Peggy Seeger and Sandra Kerr

A more extensive interview with Frankie Armstrong by Ethel Raim appears in *Sing Out!*, an American folk magazine, Volume 23, numbers 2 and 3 (\$1.00 per copy), 106 W. 28th Street, New York, NY 10001.



## Doors to My Mind

"Again, this song was written out of my experience as a social worker in the drug scene, but I think its implications go much wider than that. I'd like to dedicate it to all the women that I know who've travelled the journey of the woman in this song, and to a friend of mine who has done a great deal both to try and improve the conditions for women in prison, and to try and keep them out of prison."

—Frankie Armstrong  
 at the Sing Out! Folk Festival



I've been told since a kid in my cradle  
 To be ladylike sweet and demure  
 To rely on my elders and betters  
 And I'd grow up loved and secure

As a kid I was sent to a convent  
 And it wasn't that they were unkind  
 But they told me that school was to  
 teach me to learn  
 Then they locked up the doors to  
 my mind

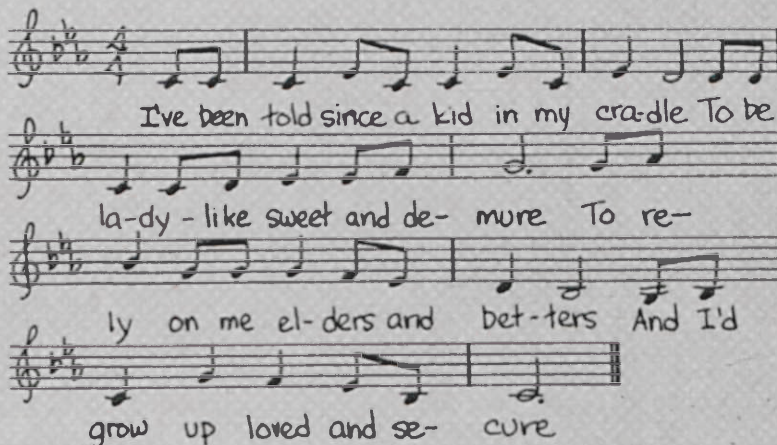
I felt trapped like a bird in a cold  
 iron cage  
 So I ran to the rocks and the sea  
 Flew away from that cage of a convent  
 But the nuns sent the cops after me

They followed, they cornered,  
 they caught me  
 Had me up at a Juvenile Court  
 The Magistrate said "You're an  
 ungrateful girl  
 It's approved school\* that deals  
 with your sort"

Now I'd never known what you'd  
 call a real home  
 Even less had I known a real bloke  
 So that cooking and sewing and  
 home care  
 Seemed like a cruel joke

I couldn't take all their preaching  
 So up to the city I fled  
 When you're feeling as lonely as I did  
 Your price is a meal or a bed

\*reform school



And though men were the custom  
 I dealt in  
 It was me that they clapped in the pen  
 The man at the bench put the blame  
 square on me  
 For the laws are made by and for men

When a woman comes out of a prison  
 Life's hard as hell outside  
 But there's ways to forget all  
 the hurt and the rage  
 And to climb from the depths to a high

But the high it was never for ever  
 And always the pain burned back through  
 When you're way past despair,  
 past caring to care  
 There seems nothing that no one can do

It was stomach pumps, shrinks, social  
 workers  
 Most of them sold on square lies  
 Never questioning all of the rules  
 they obey  
 Never asking the hows and the whys

One question I'd always been asking  
 Was "Why should this happen to me?"  
 Then my sisters helped me feel how  
 we all get this deal  
 That's what they don't want us to see

For the first time I've pride and respect  
 now  
 And some power to change things myself  
 So we need not be outcasts, my sisters,  
 If we stand up and fight for ourselves



# HOW TO RENT WOMEN'S FILMS

by  
Nancy Platt

Going to the local cinema in these days can be a drag on a woman's morale: the screen is crawling with 'unhappy spinsters', 'clinging wives', and 'sexy chicks' glimpsed hanging around in the background (while the men get on with the gambling, shooting, spying, etc). There isn't much hope of escape from these walking clichés in the commercial cinema. But there are a growing number of "women's films" available on a non-commercial basis.

These are films usually made by women, having a specifically feminist point-of-view; the makers are trying to use the film medium to open up the image of women rather than narrow it. Some of the films document political and social struggles, others are biographies, fiction, personal statements; the technical quality varies widely, but they are all trying, in different ways, to present a realistic, integrated view of what women are and can be.

Hiring these films is much easier than you think; a women's group, or a group of women, could organise a private screening, discuss the films, and in some cases invite the filmmaker or a speaker to attend. The bookings are done by post so being out of London is no disadvantage. The cost, shared out, may be no more than you'd spend on a night at the movies, watching Clint Eastwood silently bash his girlfriend's teeth out and ride off into the sunset...

## ALL YOU NEED...

to begin with is a room and a projector. The room should be large enough to accommodate your audience comfortably and long enough to get a good-sized image (10 ft. is recommended). For a clear view, have people sit on the floor and the projector sit on a sturdy table in the back. If there isn't a white wall, hang a (well-ironed) sheet for a screen. The room should be as dark as possible.

The standard gauge of films for non-commercial hire is 16 millimetre. (This is smaller than in cinemas but larger than home movies.) A 16mm sound projector can be rented on a daily basis. (They can also be found in almost any school.) The current rental rate in London is £5 per day. Look under "cinema equipment" in the yellow pages. The renter should provide you with an instruction

book; read it in the shop where you can ask questions rather than risk trying to figure it out in a roomful of waiting people. If you can, set up the table and screen and project the film once before the showing. Frankly, film projection is hounded by mechanical mishaps, but if you are prepared you can avoid most of them. Films longer than 45 minutes or so come on more than one reel; you will have to break in between. Take the time to re-wind each reel before starting the next, or you may have confusion beyond your wildest dreams.

## HOW

First of all, to stay strictly within the laws governing private exhibition, you must not advertise, make press reports or announcements, or charge an "admission fee" (the line between this and splitting the cost is suitably nebulous). Expect the rental fee (for one showing) to be anywhere from £6 to £15 per hour of running time, plus postage cost and 8% VAT. Additional showings are usually 50% of the original fee for each. Sometimes you can negotiate the price, or ask for a discount for private viewing, or for taking more than one film. The usual booking procedure goes like this:

- a) contact the distributor by phone or letter with the title and date you want;
  - b) if the film is available, they will ask for a written confirmation with the address for posting the film;
  - c) they will send you an invoice, and maybe a contract to sign and return;
  - d) they may require payment in advance — contracts and invoices state the conditions of hiring;
  - e) they post the film to you on the appointed day, you show it, and post it back to them immediately afterwards.
- Simple!

## A CATALOGUE OF WOMEN'S FILMS

Unfortunately, there is not yet an organised distribution outlet specialising in women's cinema; collecting titles is difficult but most of the best-known films are included in the following list, grouped according to the companies renting them.

Whenever possible, the filmmaker, running time and hire fee (excluding post and VAT) are given, along with a descriptive "blurb". Don't hesitate to ask the distributors for more information about films and speakers; most of them (distri-

butors) are friendly and helpful, depending on how busy they are...

## THE OTHER CINEMA

12-13 Little Newport St  
London W1 Tel: 01-734 8508  
**BETTESHANGER, KENT, 72**  
by London Women's Film Group (12 mins, £3.00). A film about a miner's wife in Kent who organised other women in support of a strike, and about the newspaper that was created, called *United Women*.

**FAKENHAM FILM** by London Women's Film Group (10 mins, £3.00). About women workers at a leather factory in Fakenham, Norfolk, and their successful six month work-in.

**MISS/MRS** by Linda Dove (6 minutes, £2.50). A visual exploration, the fantasy-images of women as stripper, bride, mother and the conflict these create when compared to women's real lives.

**SERVE AND OBEY** by London Women's Film Group (3 mins, £2.50). Schoolgirls discussing their education, its irrelevance to them, and how it differs from the education boys receive.

**WOMEN OF THE RHONDDA** by London Women's Film Group (20 mins, £4.50). Made in the Rhondda valley in Wales, four women who lived through the epic miner's strikes of the 20's and 30's recall the hardships and struggles. A history viewed for the first time through the eyes of the women involved.

**PUT YOURSELF IN MY PLACE** by Francine Winham (25 mins, £5.00). In the midst of a casual argument, a young middle class couple put themselves in the other's place. She struts around the office, carrying on with her secretary; he stands in an apron fussing over the supper. The reversal inspires much thought about the depths to which these roles are mutually exclusive and antagonistic. (Francine Winham is available to talk at screenings, at 624 4774, or 38 Earlam St, London WC2).

**WOMEN AGAINST THE BILL** by Esther Ronay (15 mins, £3.00). Seven shop stewards at an electric factory in Tottenham discuss the Industrial Relations Bill and what it means to them as women workers.

**THESE SEVEN FILMS ARE AVAILABLE AS A PACKAGE FOR £18.00.**

**COUP POUR COUP** by Marin Karmitz (90 mins, £20). A sub-titled French film depicting a spontaneous strike among women textile workers, and



their sudden rebellion against the double workload of factory and family. Acted by women with strike experience, who also collaborated on the script.

**PENTHESILEA** by Laura Mulvey and Peter Wollen (100 mins, £20). Named after the heroine of a 19th century German tragedy. A film in five parts, examining the "Amazon" myth and tracing it, using mime, animation, video, and various film techniques, from its earliest classical form to its presence in a contemporary setting.

**THE AMAZING EQUAL PAY SHOW** by London Women's Film Group (50 mins, £10.50). A political burlesque in seven tableaux from the play of the same name.

#### CONTEMPORARY FILMS

**55 Greek Street**  
London W1 Tel 01-734 4901  
**THE GIRLS** by Mai Zetterling (93 mins, £11). **THE GIRLS** is a feature length fiction film, in Swedish with sub-titles. Three actresses tour in Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*, a play in which the women of Greece refuse to have sex with their husbands until they abandon war; the women begin to discover the play's relevance to their own lives. A light film underlaid with a serious message.

**THE OTHER SIDE OF THE UNDERNEATH** by Jane Arden (135 mins, £20). One of the first British feminist films in feature length, a journey into the inner workings of a deranged woman's mind. With images of pain, humiliation, suicide, it attempts to show madness from the inside.

**ANGELA DAVIS: PORTRAIT OF A REVOLUTIONARY** by Yolande du Luart (62 mins, £9). A political record and a tribute to Angela Davis, made in 1971 by one of her students at UCLA.

**SALT OF THE EARTH** by Herbert Biberman (94 mins, £8.25). This is a landmark American film, made in 1953 about the founding of the mineworker's union, using miners and their families to play themselves. The filmmakers were victims of the Hollywood political "blacklist", and produced this film independently. In it, the exploited Mexican miners cannot overcome racial and economic discrimination against them by the company until they overcome their own against the women. The outcome is victory for the miners, and solidarity and a new identity for the women.

**WOMEN AGAINST THE BILL** is also available from Contemporary.

#### LIBERATION FILMS

**6 Bramshill Gardens**  
London NW5 Tel 01-263 0613  
**JANIE'S JANE** by Newsreel (30 mins, £3.60). A mother of five talks frankly about her life and family. She splits with her husband, continues alone and later becomes involved in community work.

**THE WOMAN'S FILM** by Newsreel (42 mins, £4.20). A documentary made entirely by women in the San Francisco newsreel group, a film about women's feelings of oppression and anger.

**ALSO AVAILABLE FROM THE OTHER CINEMA.**

**MISS AMERICA** by Newsreel (7 mins, £3.00). About the "Miss America" contest in Atlantic City, N.J. in 1968, and its rejection by the emerging women's movement.

**A WOMAN'S PLACE** by Liberation Film (32 mins, £3.60). Documentary of the first women's conference in Oxford, 1970, and the subsequent demonstrations in London in March of 1971.

**WOMAN ARE YOU SATISFIED WITH YOUR LIFE?** by Tufnell Park Women's Lib Workshop (silent, 10 mins, £1.20). Contrast of the real-life situation of women with the image portrayed through advertising.

**FILM FOR DISCUSSION** by the London Women's Film Group (10 mins, £3.50). A type of "trigger film" in which certain everyday domestic and social situations are re-enacted to bring out the contradictions facing the women involved.

**ONE, TWO, THREE** (30 mins, approx £5.00). The growth of the Children's Community Centre in Highgate New Town, North London. Shows the creche at work, the parents' involvement, and explains the underlying factors which led to its development.

**SALT OF THE EARTH** and **WOMEN AGAINST THE BILL** are also available from Liberation Films.

Liberation Films offers help and consultation in putting together programmes of short or feature-length films on any subject, and assistance in contacting speakers. They also will help organise showings of "trigger films" to provoke discussion after screenings.

**CONCORD FILMS COUNCIL**  
Nacton, Ipswich, Suffolk  
Tel Ipswich 76012  
**WOMEN (THE WORLD TOMORROW)** by Granada TV (25 mins, £3.00). A film about

women's exclusion from the professions in Britain, and a comparison with the situation of women in Russia, Japan, and Switzerland.

**THE IMPORTANT THING IS LOVE** (50 mins, £4.40). Lesbians speaking very frankly about themselves and their lives, interviews and people's reactions to them.

**TWO WOMEN** by Thames TV (40 mins, £4.00). A comparison of two women, one an English working class woman and the other a professional woman in Hungary.

**WOMEN IN PRISON** by Jenny Barraclough/BBC TV (70 mins, £6.00). A documentary film about Holloway prison, and the lives of the women incarcerated there.

**CONCORD** specialises in educational films, and they have films on abortion, childbirth, VD, etc. Their catalogue is available for 40p - send cheque or postal order.

#### CONNOISSEUR FILMS

**167 Oxford Street**  
London W1 Tel 01-734 6555  
**WANDA** by Barbara Loden (105 mins, £20.00). Barbara Loden wrote, directed and acted the title role in this film about a woman brought up in a working class mining town, deadened by poverty and the prospect of being trapped in her dreary surroundings for ever. A portrait of the passive, dependent woman produced by a dead-end environment.

#### CINEGATE

**70 Portobello Road**  
London W11 Tel 01-727 2651  
**HOW ABOUT YOU?** by Bonnie Freedman, Marilyn Mulford, Deborah Shaffer (25 mins, £10.00). A documentary film about birth control and sex education, examined in interviews with young people.

Films by Gannor Nelson, available until April from:  
**TWENTY FOUR FRAMES**  
13 Chapstow Mansions  
London W2 Tel 01-727 7244  
thereafter: c/o Spare Rib.  
**SCHMEERGUNTZ** (15 mins, £3.50). A frantic collage of the less demure activities in a woman's life... those which escape the TV cameras and movie-makers. **SCHMEERGUNTZ** brazenly tours through the sticky, icky activities in the real life of the "housewife".

**KIRSA NICHOLINA** (16 mins, £3.50). A naturalistic, deceptively simple film of a child being born to a couple in their home, accompanied by original guitar music by the father.

**TAKE OFF** (12 mins, £3.00). The film observes a stripper to the end, culminating in an apt, ironic comment on the truth behind the phenomenon of "stripping".

**MY NAME IS OONA** (10 mins, £3.00). The film captures in subtle images the coming to consciousness of a girl (the filmmaker's daughter), accompanied by the sound of the girl repeating her name as if in awe.

**MOONS POOL** (15 mins, £4.00). An underwater fantasy in which the filmmaker investigates the relationship between her "real-time" life and her life of dreams.

**SYLVIA, FRAN AND JOY** by Joan Churchill (approx 30 mins). A candidly-observed documentary following the lives of three different women as they talk about how they perceive their lives and themselves. Though they can be easily categorised, a warmth comes through which supercedes that process; the effect is of meeting and liking them.

**SYLVIA, FRAN AND JOY** will probably be available for screenings and talks direct from the filmmaker. Enquire c/o Spare Rib.

Films by Anne Severson.  
**I CHANGE I AM THE SAME** (1 min). A series of fast clothes/role changes between a man and a woman, standing on their balcony. Accompanied by "There's No Place Like Home".

**RIVERBODY** (8 mins). The faculty, staff and students of the San Francisco Art Institute; 87 nudes in a continuous dissolve. Both these films express subtly the harmony between people.

**THE BIG CHAKRA** (13 mins). "A meditation on the human female vagina". Close-ups of 38 cunts, women ranging from 3 months to 63 years. The film inspires varied reactions and much thought. Silent, with a narration by the filmmaker.

**INTRODUCTION TO HUMANITIES** (10 mins). A "tension-breaker" to follow the film **CHAKRA**. A class of Int. to Humanities (fully clothed) introduce themselves, one by one, to the camera.

Anne Severson will bring these and two new films for a screening and give a talk. She asks a fee, which is negotiable. Contact her c/o Spare Rib.

Any questions, advice, or information? Contact Nancy Platt c/o Spare Rib Newburgh St, London 4XS.



# WHAT WOMEN NEED BUT COULDN'T GET TILL NOW

Whether you are single or engaged, married or divorced, legally separated, deserted or about to re-marry . . . whatever your situation 'WISP' will help.

What is 'WISP'?

Women's Individual Savings Plan.

A comprehensive insurance-savings plan, designed by women, solely for women, with only the interests of women in mind. Something which has never existed until now.

Before you change another typewriter ribbon, nappy or your mind, send or 'phone for the free 'WISP' booklet now. It answers all the questions you didn't know who or how to ask.

Send the coupon to:

Dorothy Genn

Langham Life Assurance Co Ltd

Migdal House, Finsbury Square,

London EC2A 1BH

Telephone: 01-628 8881

Please send me without obligation  
a copy of your free WISP booklet

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

SR5

Are you 17-30 ☐

31-45 ☐ over 45 ☐

Not applicable in Eire.



Women's Individual Savings Plan - it grows



| Page | Title                                                                                  | Author          | Rights                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1    | Maureen Reynolds, out of prison                                                        | Smith, Ann      | Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Maureen Reynolds, out of prison. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.                                                        |
| 4    | Letters                                                                                |                 | Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for this item. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.                                                                              |
| 6    | Short List                                                                             | Nicholls, Jill  | Usage Terms: © Jill Nicholls                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 7    | Short List                                                                             | Nicholls, Jill  | Usage Terms: © Jill Nicholls                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 7    | Quest a Feminist Quarterly: Insanity and Control: A class Trap by Alice Quinn          | Scott, Ann      | Usage Terms: © Ann Scott. This item can be used for private study, non-commercial research and educational purposes only. You may not use this work for any commercial purpose.                                                               |
| 7    | from posters and pamphlets listed                                                      |                 | Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for from posters and pamphlets listed. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.                                                      |
| 8    | We believe all women have the right to control their own bodiesand the right to choose |                 | Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for We believe all women have the right to control their own bodiesand the right to choose. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item. |
| 9    | Feminist case against enforced population control                                      | Greer, Germaine | Usage Terms: © Germaine Greer                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 10   | Sterilisation - experiences of women who made the decision                             | O'Sullivan, Sue | Usage Terms: © Sue O'Sullivan                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 10   | Position of Reproductive system in body                                                | Driver, Carole  | Usage Terms: © Carole Driver                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 11   | Sterilisation - experiences of women who made the decision                             | O'Sullivan, Sue | Usage Terms: © Sue O'Sullivan                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 11   | Standard Sterilisation; Laparoscopy                                                    | Driver, Carole  | Usage Terms: © Carole Driver                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 12   | Sterilisation - experiences of women who made the decision                             | O'Sullivan, Sue | Usage Terms: © Sue O'Sullivan                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 13   | Sterilisation - experiences of women who made the decision                             | O'Sullivan, Sue | Usage Terms: © Sue O'Sullivan                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 15   | photos of male pin-ups                                                                 |                 | Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for photos of male pin-ups . Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.                                                                |
|      |                                                                                        |                 | Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Doors are opening my                                                                                                                                                      |



|    |                                                                                       |                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 16 | Doors are opening my mind - self interview Emmy Smith                                 | Smith, Emmy      | mind - self interview Emmy Smith. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.                                                                                                              |
| 16 | Emmy Smith                                                                            | Smith, Emmy      | Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Emmy Smith. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.                                                                |
| 17 | Turkish clothing workiers. The Strike at Saadet Fashions in Hackney                   | Haw, Cathy       | Usage Terms: © Catherine Haw                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 17 | Women on Picket Line at Saadet Fashions                                               |                  | Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Women on Picket Line at Saadet Fashions. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.                                   |
| 18 | Every School should have a crossing - campaign starts at Highbury Quadrant, Islington | Scott, Ann       | Usage Terms: © Ann Scott. This item can be used for private study, non-commercial research and educational purposes only. You may not use this work for any commercial purpose.                                                  |
| 18 | Women workers in the media - draft non-sexist code of practice conference             | Archer, Marilyn  | Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Women workers in the media - draft non-sexist code of practice conference. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item. |
| 19 | Women workers in the media - draft non-sexist code of practice conference             | Archer, Marilyn  | Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Women workers in the media - draft non-sexist code of practice conference. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item. |
| 19 | woman playing a triangle behind a screen                                              | Roche, Christine | Usage Terms: © Christine Roche                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 20 | St Johns Wood Women's trial ends. Landlord refused to serve women.                    | Scott, Ann       | Usage Terms: © Ann Scott. This item can be used for private study, non-commercial research and educational purposes only. You may not use this work for any commercial purpose.                                                  |
| 20 | Magistrate at hearing                                                                 | Stern, Deborah   | Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Magistrate at hearing. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.                                                     |
| 21 | Trial of women charged afterlandlord refused to serve them in North london pub        | Scott, Ann       | Usage Terms: © Ann Scott. This item can be used for private study, non-commercial research and educational purposes only. You may not use this work for any commercial purpose.                                                  |
|    |                                                                                       |                  | Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate                                                                                                                                                                                       |



|    |                                                                                    |                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 21 | defence council Jenny Styring. Prosecution David Pitman                            | Stern, Deborah            | the copyright holder for defence council Jenny Styring. Prosecution David Pitman. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.                                                                       |
| 22 | Reflections on Trial of women                                                      | Scott, Ann                | Usage Terms: © Ann Scott. This item can be used for private study, non-commercial research and educational purposes only. You may not use this work for any commercial purpose.                                                           |
| 22 | High court july 1974 . Lord Widgery dismissing women's application v Daily Express | Stern, Deborah            | Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for High court july 1974 . Lord Widgery dismissing women's application v Daily Express. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item. |
| 23 | Leeds women's Aid: social services have other priorities                           |                           | Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Leeds women's Aid: social services have other priorities. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.                           |
| 23 | local radio trivialises women's movement                                           | Liddington, Jill          | Usage Terms: © Dr Jill Liddington, Honorary Research Fellow, the University of Leeds.                                                                                                                                                     |
| 23 | News                                                                               | Walker, Angela            | Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for News. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.                                                                               |
| 24 | Opening up Oxford: women students campaign for equal opportunity                   | Oxford Women's Liberation | Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Opening up Oxford: women students campaign for equal opportunity. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.                   |
| 24 | Women against Quota's Protest                                                      | Oxford Women's Liberation | Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Women against Quota's Protest. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.                                                      |
| 25 | Yorkshire Maternity leave                                                          |                           | Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Yorkshire Maternity leave. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.                                                          |
| 25 | Manchester: next national conference                                               |                           | Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Manchester: next national conference. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.                                               |
|    |                                                                                    |                           | Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate all the copyright holders for What happens in                                                                                                                                                  |



|    |                                                                          |                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 25 | What happens in special education                                        | Henderson, Roberta; Cooper, Liz; Bibby, Gill | special education. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.                                                                                                                                 |
| 25 | Rape and the right to Picket outside US Embassy                          |                                              | Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Rape and the right to Picket outside US Embassy. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.                               |
| 26 | Bristol Women's Abortion and Contraception Campaign Harlech TV programme | Underwood, Betty; Bristol Women's Centre     | Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate all the copyright holders for Bristol Women's Abortion and Contraception Campaign Harlech TV programme. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item. |
| 26 | Italy: Abortion                                                          |                                              | Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Italy: Abortion. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.                                                               |
| 27 | Portugal: women mobbed                                                   | Caldas, Teresa P                             | Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Portugal: women mobbed. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.                                                        |
| 27 | USA: Maids sue employer, Coloumbia University                            | Collier, Ester                               | Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for USA: Maids sue employer, Coloumbia University. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.                                 |
| 27 | Maids campaigners                                                        | Robinson, Jolly                              | Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Maids campaigners. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.                                                             |
| 30 | Inside - Maureen Reynolds                                                | Parker, Rosie                                | Usage Terms: © Rosie Parker (Rozsika Parker) (deceased)                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 31 | a view of F wing in Holloway, a long term wing                           | Arrowsmith, Pat                              | Usage Terms: © Arrowsmith, Pat. This item can be used for private study, non-commercial research and educational purposes only. You may not use this work for any commercial purpose.                                                |
| 32 | Inside - Maureen Reynolds                                                | Parker, Rosie                                | Usage Terms: © Rosie Parker (Rozsika Parker) (deceased)                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 32 | view from Pat Arrowsmith's cell in Holloway in 1968/9                    | Arrowsmith, Pat                              | Usage Terms: © Arrowsmith, Pat. This item can be used for private study, non-commercial research and educational purposes only. You may not use this work for any commercial purpose.                                                |
| 33 | Inside - Maureen Reynolds                                                | Parker, Rosie                                | Usage Terms: © Rosie Parker (Rozsika Parker) (deceased)                                                                                                                                                                              |
|    |                                                                          |                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |



|    |                                                                            |                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 33 | The window of the television room in Holloway prison                       | Arrowsmith, Pat   | Usage Terms: © Arrowsmith, Pat. This item can be used for private study, non-commercial research and educational purposes only. You may not use this work for any commercial purpose.                 |
| 34 | Inside - Maureen Reynolds                                                  | Parker, Rosie     | Usage Terms: © Rosie Parker (Rozsika Parker) (deceased)                                                                                                                                               |
| 35 | Inside - Maureen Reynolds                                                  | Parker, Rosie     | Usage Terms: © Rosie Parker (Rozsika Parker) (deceased)                                                                                                                                               |
| 35 | drawing of Pat Arrowsmith's cell that she smuggled out of Holloway         | Arrowsmith, Pat   | Usage Terms: © Arrowsmith, Pat. This item can be used for private study, non-commercial research and educational purposes only. You may not use this work for any commercial purpose.                 |
| 35 | Trapped                                                                    | Arrowsmith, Pat   | Usage Terms: © Arrowsmith, Pat. This item can be used for private study, non-commercial research and educational purposes only. You may not use this work for any commercial purpose.                 |
| 36 | Escape, Bricked up , and Skulls                                            | Arrowsmith, Pat   | Usage Terms: © Arrowsmith, Pat. This item can be used for private study, non-commercial research and educational purposes only. You may not use this work for any commercial purpose.                 |
| 37 | Memoirs of a survivor . Doris Lessing. Octagon Press                       | Severson, Anne    | Usage Terms: © AliceAnne Parker (aka Anne Severson)                                                                                                                                                   |
| 37 | Anne Severson                                                              |                   | Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Anne Severson. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.                                  |
| 38 | Yonnondio: from the thirties Tillie Olsen. Faber                           | Radford, Jean     | Usage Terms: © Jean Radford                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 38 | Go tell Aunt Rhody, the old grey goose is dead                             | Aliki             | Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Go tell Aunt Rhody, the old grey goose is dead. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item. |
| 38 | Hal by Jean MacGibbon                                                      |                   | Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Hal by Jean MacGibbon. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.                          |
| 39 | still from Badlands                                                        |                   | Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for still from Badlands. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.                            |
| 40 | Theatre:King Lear, adapted and directed by Buzz Goodbody. The Place London | Wandor, Michelene | Usage Terms: © Michelene Wandor                                                                                                                                                                       |



|    |                                                                         |                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 40 | Theatre: Kennedy's Children by Robert Patrick at the Kings Head. London | Feldman, Sally                             | Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Theatre: Kennedy's Children by Robert Patrick at the Kings Head. London . Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item. |
| 41 | Homeworkers: an investigation by a woman's liberation group             | Kennedy, Mary; Hope, Emily;De Winter, Anne | Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate all the copyright holders for Homeworkers: an investigation by a woman's liberation group. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.         |
| 42 | Homeworkers: an investigation by a woman's liberation group             |                                            | Usage Terms: We have been unable to locate the copyright holder for Homeworkers: an investigation by a woman's liberation group. Please contact copyright@bl.uk with any information you have regarding this item.              |
| 43 | MUSIC Frankie Armstrong                                                 | Fudger, Marion                             | Usage Terms: © (now) Marion Gilbert                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 44 | Frankie Armstrong                                                       | Fudger, Marion                             | Usage Terms: © (now) Marion Gilbert                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 45 | Frankie Armstrong                                                       | Fudger, Marion                             | Usage Terms: © (now) Marion Gilbert                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| 45 | I've been told since a kid in my cradle                                 | Armstrong, Frankie                         | Usage Terms: © Frankie Armstrong                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 46 | How to rent women's films                                               | Platt, Nancy                               | Usage Terms: © Nancy Platt                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 47 | How to rent women's films                                               | Platt, Nancy                               | Usage Terms: © Nancy Platt                                                                                                                                                                                                      |